KCGM 1045

C·M·B·

森羅博物館の事件目録

02

加藤元浩

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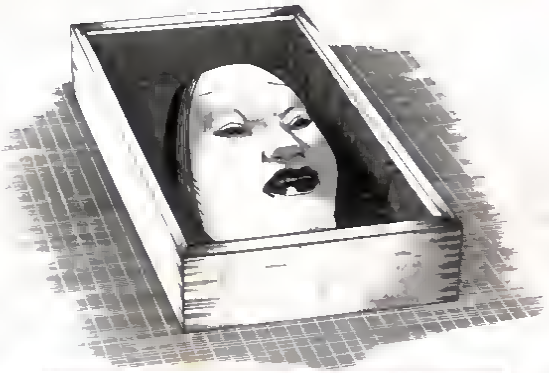
Welcome to "Wunderkammer"



森鷗博物館収蔵 Op0531676

泥眼
deigan

安房左衛門 作

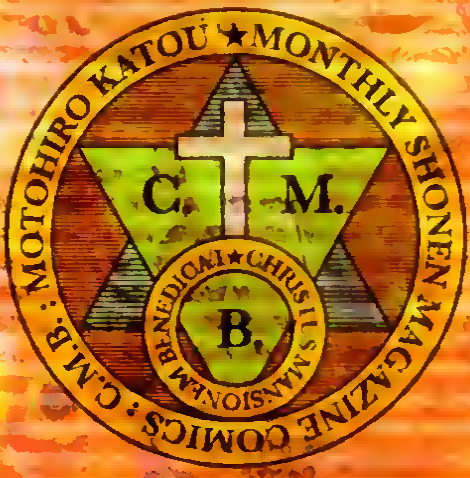
600年以上に亘る歴史を持つ伝統的舞台芸術「能楽」に使われる面の一種。泥眼は妖気を秘めた女性の相を示し、『葵上』や『鉄輪』などで用いられる

Monthly Shonen Magazine Comics

桜が咲きました。花見をしました。
とても楽しかっただです。
それはさておき、私は携帯を持っていません。
待ち合わせで困ることもあるのですが、
そうでない時は困らないので、
差し引きゼロと言えるでしょう。
花見の時、Aさんに携帯をかりました。
用件を話し終わり、Aさんに返しました。
私「はい・・・ありがとう。
　切り方がわからない」
A「はァ!?」
持ってないからわかりません。当然です。

KATOU MOTOHIRO
（かとう もとひろ）

cover design Kraken



加藤元浩作品

C.M.B　第1～2巻

Q.E.D.　第1～21巻

以下続刊

ロケットマン　全10巻

この先は入館料が必要となります

02

加藤元浩

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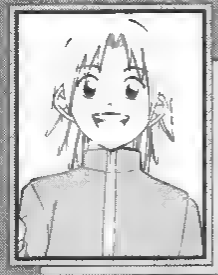
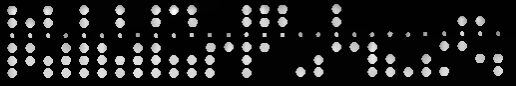


榊 森羅 *Shinra Sakaki*

小さな林の中に建つ『森羅博物館』の館長。知の象徴である“C”“M”“B”の三つの指輪を持つ。広範な知識と卓越した洞察力を持つ反面、一般常識にはかなり疎い。

七瀬 立樹 *Tatsuki Nanase*

情にモロイが仁義に厚い、イマドキいないタイプの元気印系女子高生。その本性を隠し、良家のご子息・ご令嬢が集う超名門・私立 明友高校に通っている。



C.M.B. KATOU MOTOHIRO

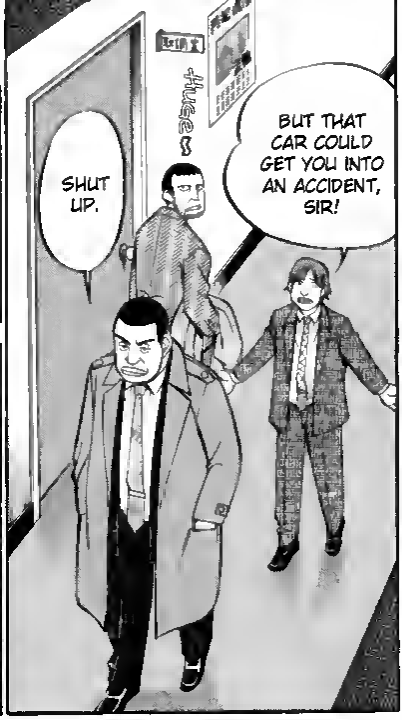
Op.03

青(あお)いビル<前編(ぜんぺん)>

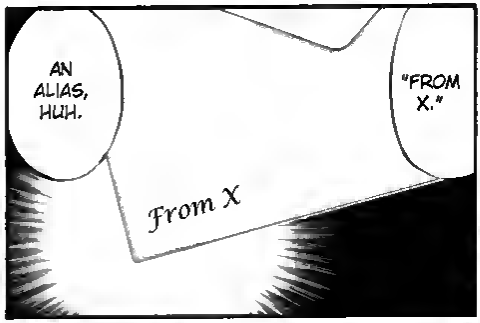
Blue building

A CAR THAT CAN ALMOST BE CALLED JUNK DUE TO HOW OFTEN YOU HIT SUSPECTS' CARS IN HIGH SPEED PURSUITS...
POLICE HQ.
WOULDN'T IT BE BETTER FOR YOU IF CARED ABOUT YOUR APPEARANCE?
PANTS THAT ARE ALWAYS TORN BECAUSE OF FIGHTING WITH CULPRITS...
I'LL DO THAT WHEN THERE'S NO MORE CRIME IN THIS CITY!
POLICE INSPECTOR TAKESHI KUJIRAZAKI OF THE TOKYO METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

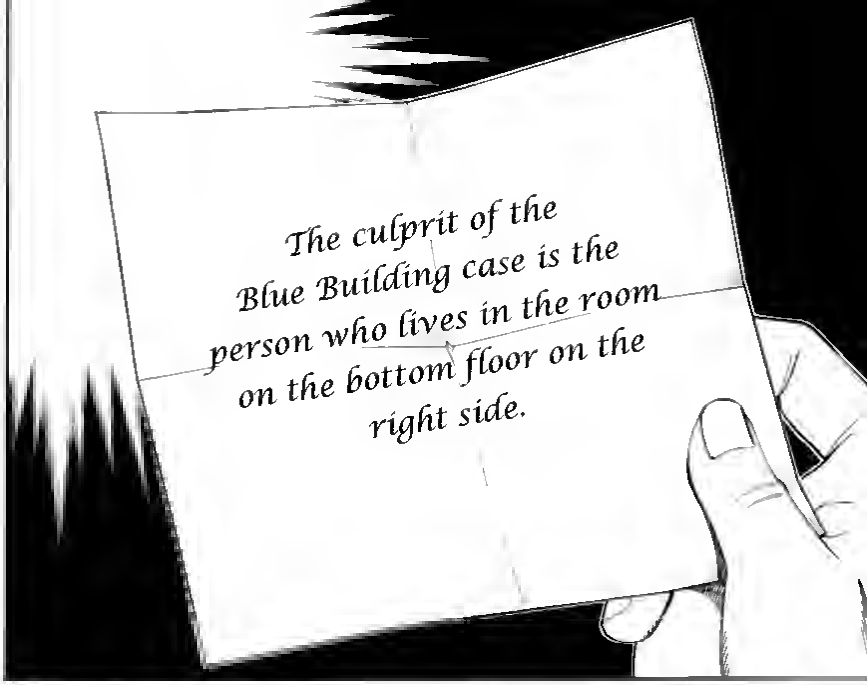
How rude
THAT CAR IS STILL MORE DEPENDABLE THAN YOU!

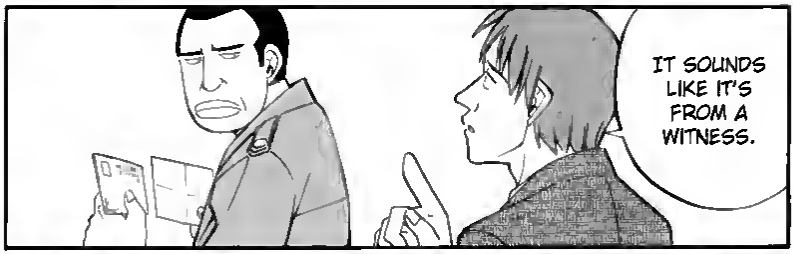

Wanted
SHUT UP.
BUT THAT CAR COULD GET YOU INTO AN ACCIDENT, SIR!

BY THE WAY, SIR...


AN ALIAS, HUH.
"FROM X."
From X

THIS LETTER JUST ARRIVED THIS MORNING.


The culprit of the Blue Building case is the person who lives in the room on the bottom floor on the right side.


IT SOUNDS LIKE IT'S FROM A WITNESS.

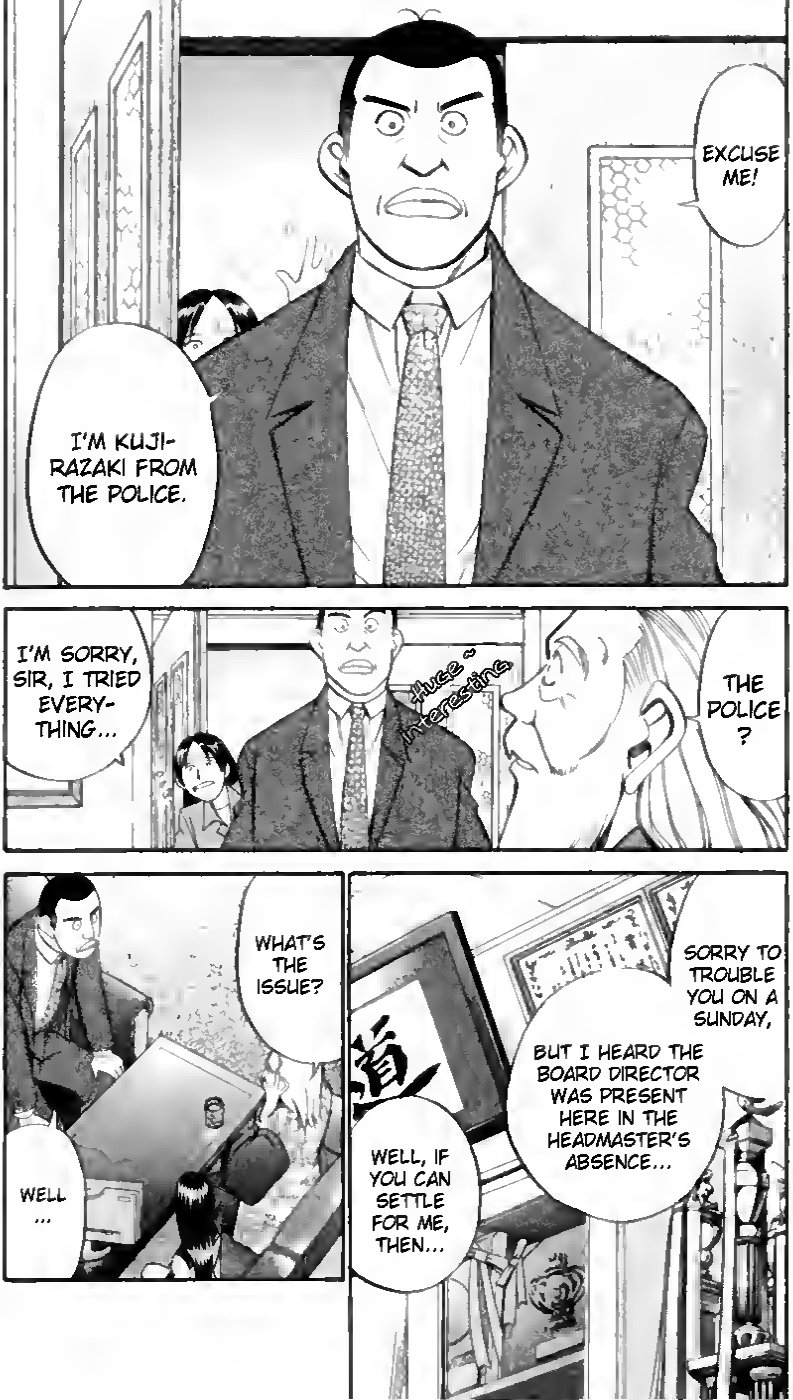
YE... YESSIR !!
YOU IDIOT! USE YOUR HEAD A BIT!
EH?
SO WHY DID YOU TOUCH IT BARE-HANDED AND GET YOUR FINGERPRINTS ALL OVER IT?

A FAMOUS SCHOOL WHERE THE CHILDREN FROM RESPECTED FAMILIES GO TO LEARN.
THIS IS WHERE I GO TO SCHOOL, MEIYUU HIGH SCHOOL...
EXAM IN PROGRESS
NO ENTRY
...OR RATHER, NO ONE'S SUPPOSED TO BE HERE.
BUT SINCE TODAY IS SUNDAY, NO ONE'S HERE.

SCHOOL,
SCHOOL!
WHEN I FINISH THIS, I CAN GO TO SCHOOL!
SHINRA SAKAKI
A YOUNG BOY POSSESSING THE THREE RINGS ENGRAVED "C," "M," "B."
IF I PASS THE EXAM, I CAN GO TO SCHOOL, RIGHT?
DO THE EXAM QUIETLY!
OKAY!
THIS SHINRA KID RECENTLY HELPED ME IN A CASE.

RECEPTION OFFICE
TO REPAY HIM, I PROMISED TO HELP HIM GET INTO SCHOOL.
TATSUKI NANASE
SHE TRIES TO CARRY HERSELF GRACEFULLY, BUT IS TOO COMPETITIVE, SO THAT GOAL IS STILL VERY FAR AWAY.
MY GRANDPA IS THE HEAD OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM.
FROM KINDER-GARTEN TO UNIVERSITY, ALL CONTROL IS IN HIS HANDS.

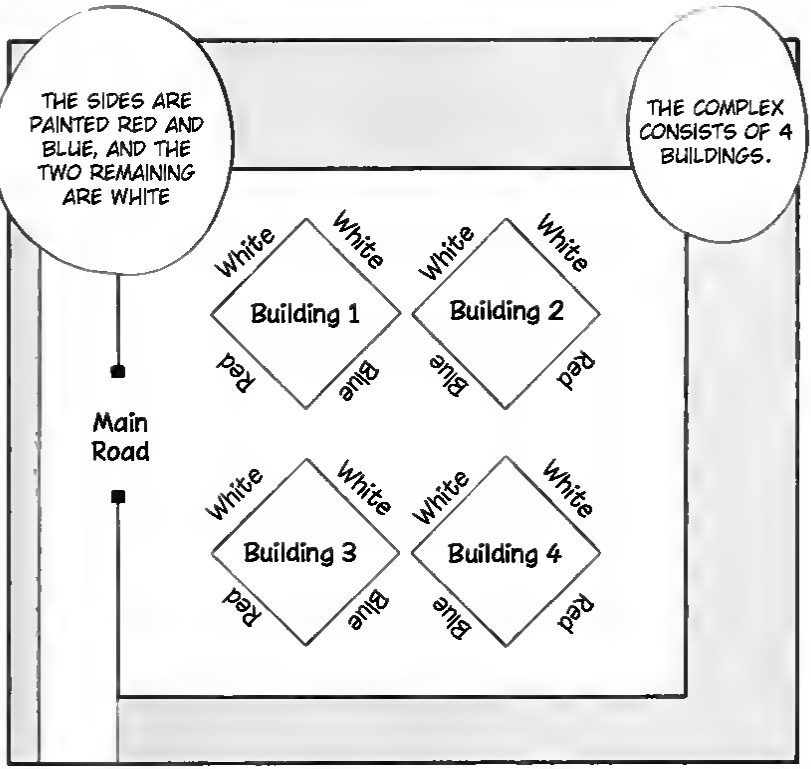
I WAS PREPARED TO BE REJECTED WHEN I ASKED MY GRANDPA FOR HELP.
SORRY, GRANDPA, FOR CAUSING YOU TROUBLE.
GWAHAHA!
NO PROBLEM! IT LOOKS INTERESTING.
AS IT TURNS OUT, HE ACCEPTED RIGHT AWAY.
RIGHT NOW SHINRA IS TAKING THE ENTRANCE EXAMS.
TATSUKI, YOU SAID THAT THIS KID HAS NEVER BEEN TO SCHOOL, RIGHT?
BUT IT SEEMS THAT HE'S DOING THE EXAM EASILY.
MAYBE HE CAN GO STRAIGHT TO JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL IMMEDIATELY.
SIR!
DON'T GET IN THE WAY OF AN INVESTIGATION!

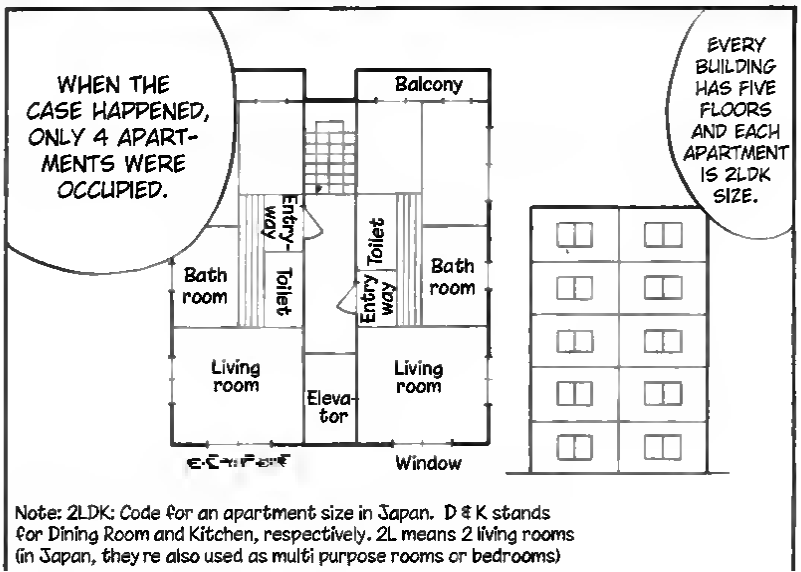

EXCUSE ME!
I'M KUJI-RAZAKI FROM THE POLICE.
THE POLICE?
Huee~ interesting
I'M SORRY, SIR, I TRIED EVERY-THING...
SORRY TO TROUBLE YOU ON A SUNDAY,
BUT I HEARD THE BOARD DIRECTOR WAS PRESENT HERE IN THE HEADMASTER'S ABSENCE...
WELL, IF YOU CAN SETTLE FOR ME, THEN...
WHAT'S THE ISSUE?
WELL ...

ACTUALLY, AROUND A WEEK AGO, A CASE HAPPENED NEARBY.
DO YOU KNOW THE OLD APARTMENT COMPLEX ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROAD OVER THERE?
YES.
IT'S THE ONE WITH THE WALLS PAINTED BLUE AND RED...
IT'S A FOUR BUILDING MULTI-UNIT APARTMENT COMPLEX.
FUH...
新マンション
建設予定
THEY'VE BEEN PLANNING TO RENNOVATE IT SINCE HALF A YEAR AGO DUE TO ITS AGE.

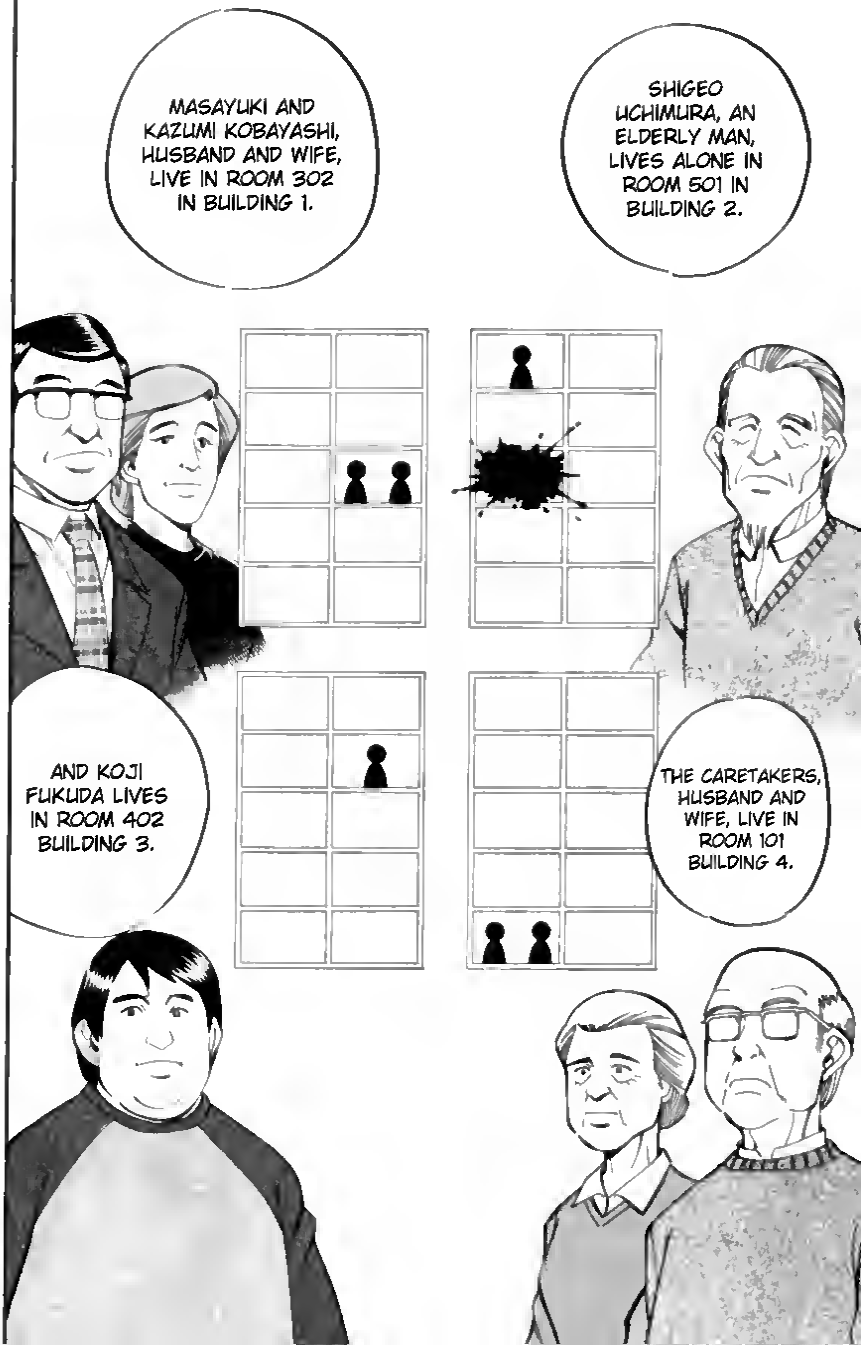
CHECKING IF THERE WERE ANY INTRUDERS BECAUSE THE COMPLEX HAD BEEN ABANDONED BY MORE THAN HALF OF ITS RESIDENTS.
THAT NIGHT, THE CARE-TAKER WAS PATROLLING.
FALL
FOLKS ARE TURNING THEIR LIGHTS OUT...
THE THIRD FLOOR WINDOW ...
THAT'S MR. OOBA'S ROOM!
THERE'S BLOOD ON IT!
A ROCK?

THE PERSON LIVING IN THAT ROOM GOT HIT BY A ROCK.
LUCKILY HIS LIFE IS NOT IN DANGER, BUT HE'S BEING TREATED AT A HOSPITAL.
THE CARETAKER SAID THAT NO ONE FROM OUTSIDE CAME IN.
WE SUSPECT THAT THE CULPRIT IS ONE OF THE APARTMENT'S RESIDENTS, SIR.
You're ignoring me?
IN OTHER WORDS, THE SUSPECT IS ONE OF THE APARTMENT'S RESIDENTS?

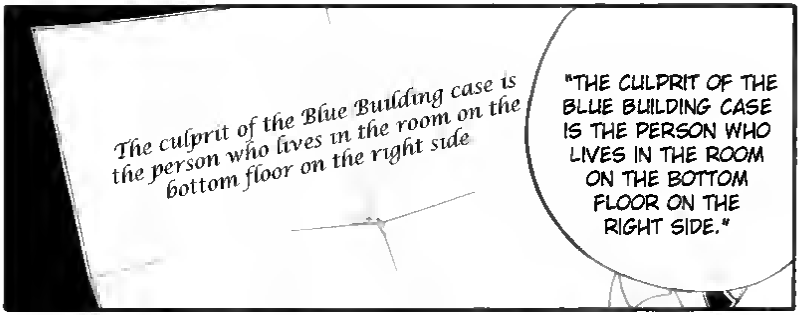


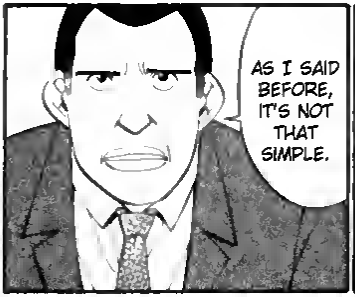


Note: 2LDK: Code for an apartment size in Japan. D & K stands for Dining Room and Kitchen, respectively. 2L means 2 living rooms (in Japan, they're also used as multi purpose rooms or bedrooms)

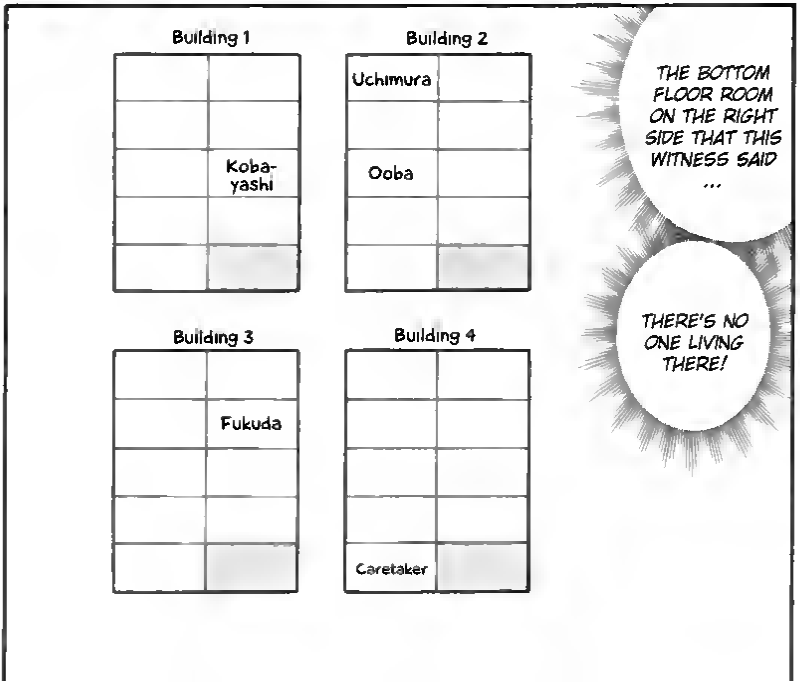

MASAYUKI AND KAZUMI KOBAYASHI, HUSBAND AND WIFE, LIVE IN ROOM 302 IN BUILDING 1.
SHIGEO UCHIMURA, AN ELDERLY MAN, LIVES ALONE IN ROOM 501 IN BUILDING 2.
AND KOJI FUKUDA LIVES IN ROOM 402 BUILDING 3.
THE CARETAKERS, HUSBAND AND WIFE, LIVE IN ROOM 101 BUILDING 4.

EVERY RESIDENT THERE AGREES THAT "IT'S IMPOSSIBLE FOR ANYONE TO HATE OOBA."
IN THAT CASE, WHY DON'T YOU INVESTIGATE WHO AMONG THOSE PEOPLE HAS A BAD RELATIONSHIP WITH THE VICTIM...
THAT'S WHERE THE PROBLEM LIES.
PEOPLE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD ALSO SEE HIM AS A FRIENDLY, NICE GUY.
HE'S A VERY FRIENDLY MAN THAT ALWAYS GREETS THE OTHER RESIDENTS OF THE APARTMENT.
A LETTER?
IT WAS SENT 3 DAYS AFTER OOBA WAS ATTACKED.
AND THEN, COMPLICATING THE CASE, COMES THIS LETTER.

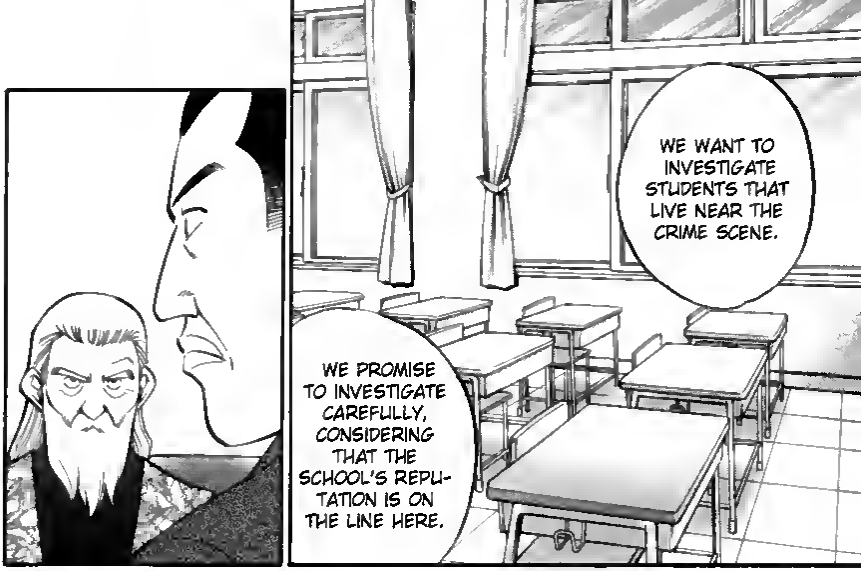

The culprit of the Blue Building case is the person who lives in the room on the bottom floor on the right side
"THE CULPRIT OF THE BLUE BUILDING CASE IS THE PERSON WHO LIVES IN THE ROOM ON THE BOTTOM FLOOR ON THE RIGHT SIDE."


AS I SAID BEFORE, IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE.

IN THAT CASE, THERE SHOULDN'T BE ANY MORE PROBLEMS, RIGHT?
THERE'S AN EYE-WITNESS?


Building 1
Koba-yashi
Building 2
Uchimura
Ooba
Building 3
Fukuda
Building 4
Caretaker
THE BOTTOM FLOOR ROOM ON THE RIGHT SIDE THAT THIS WITNESS SAID ...
THERE'S NO ONE LIVING THERE!

From X
WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THIS X PERSON MEANS.
SO, THIS LETTER IS JUST SOMEONE'S PRANK?
MAYBE THIS WITNESS JUST MADE A MISTAKE... BUT IT'S ALSO POSSIBLE THAT HE OR SHE IS RELATED TO THE CASE.
AFTER FURTHER INVESTIGATION, WE KNOW THAT THIS ENVELOPE IS NOT COMMONLY SOLD.
SO WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS, THE SENDER IS A STUDENT FROM OUR SCHOOL?
THAT'S COR-RECT.
AROUND HERE, ONLY THE MEIYUU HIGH SCHOOL SHOP IS SELLING THEM.
PLEASE SHOW ME THE LIST OF STUDENTS IN THIS SCHOOL.

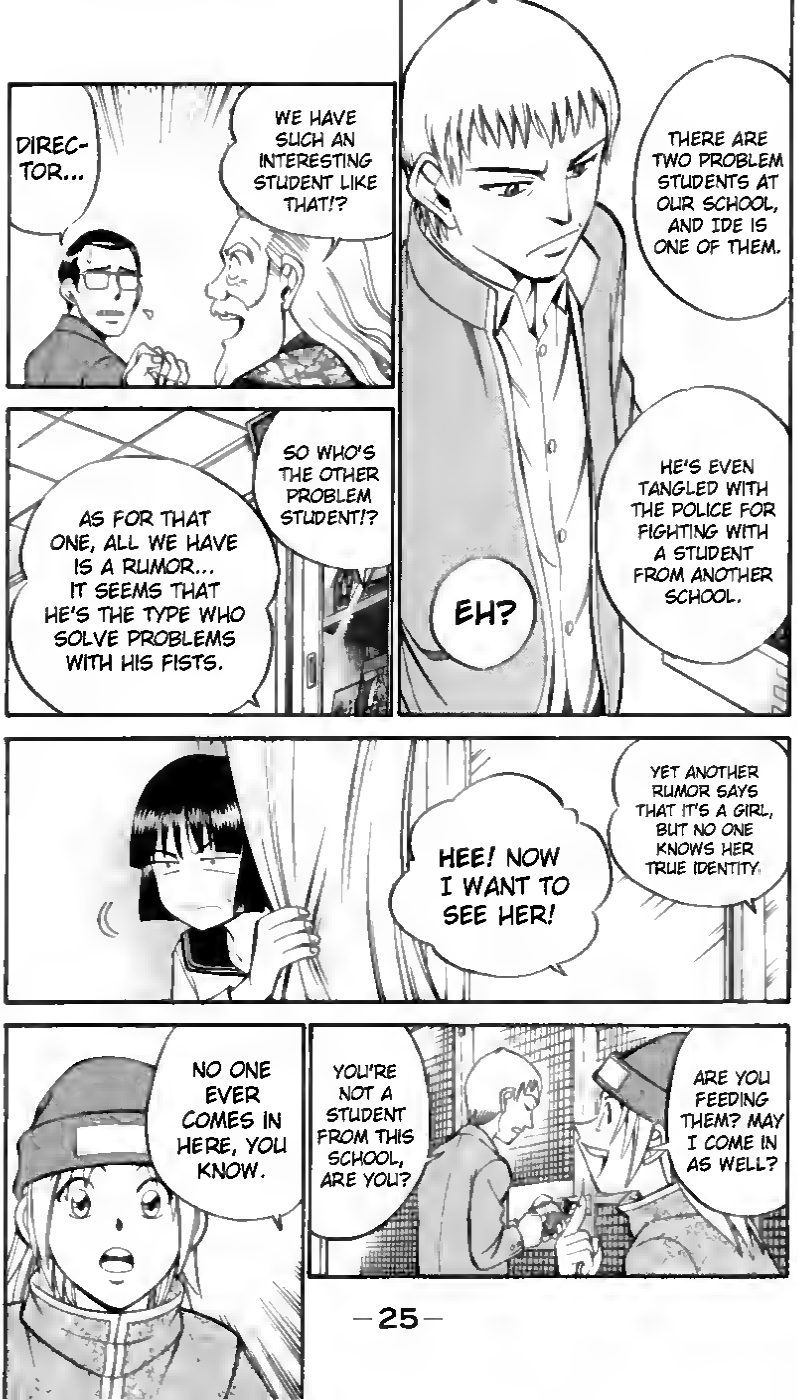

WE WANT TO INVESTIGATE STUDENTS THAT LIVE NEAR THE CRIME SCENE.
WE PROMISE TO INVESTIGATE CAREFULLY, CONSIDERING THAT THE SCHOOL'S REPUTATION IS ON THE LINE HERE.

I GRANT YOU PERMISSION, BUT PLEASE RETURN THE COPY OF STUDENTS' NAMES AFTER THE INVESTIGATION IS OVER.
ALSO, IF YOU WANT TO INTERROGATE OUR STUDENTS, PLEASE DO IT IN THIS SCHOOL WITH THE HOMEROOM TEACHER ACCOMPANYING THEM. THAT'S ALL I'M ASKING.

AL-RIGHT.
THE STUDENT LIST IS IN THE TEACHER'S OFFICE.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.
NEAT.

SIR, I'M NOT SURE HE WAS SERIOUS, OR EVEN UNDERSTOOD THE MEANING OF THIS EXAM...
BUT, THE TIME IS STILL ...
IT'S OVER, SIR, HAVEN'T YOU BEEN WATCHING IT THROUGH THE CAMERA?
HUH? THE EXAM?
AND RAN OUT OF THE ROOM JUST LIKE THAT.
HE JUST SHOUTED "DONE!"
WHAT ...
HE DIDN'T USE AN ERASER EVEN ONCE.
SO THE SCHOOL HAS SOME PET BIRDS, HUH!
WAA!
AH! HE'S BY THE BIRD CAGE!
THAT IDIOT...
LOOKS LIKE IT'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FOR HIM.

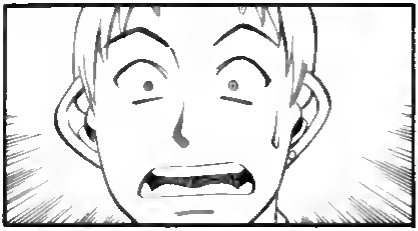
I WONDER IF I CAN GET IN?
THERE'S THE DOOR!
HEY! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING!
DON'T DESTROY THE CAGE.
IDE?
THIS IS BAD! HE MET IDE!
SUGIHIKO IDE
MEIYUU HIGH SCHOOL 2ND YEAR STUDENT.


DIREC-TOR...
WE HAVE SUCH AN INTERESTING STUDENT LIKE THAT!?
THERE ARE TWO PROBLEM STUDENTS AT OUR SCHOOL, AND IDE IS ONE OF THEM.
SO WHO'S THE OTHER PROBLEM STUDENT!?
AS FOR THAT ONE, ALL WE HAVE IS A RUMOR... IT SEEMS THAT HE'S THE TYPE WHO SOLVE PROBLEMS WITH HIS FISTS.
EH?
HE'S EVEN TANGLED WITH THE POLICE FOR FIGHTING WITH A STUDENT FROM ANOTHER SCHOOL.
YET ANOTHER RUMOR SAYS THAT IT'S A GIRL, BUT NO ONE KNOWS HER TRUE IDENTITY.
HEE! NOW I WANT TO SEE HER!
NO ONE EVER COMES IN HERE, YOU KNOW.
YOU'RE NOT A STUDENT FROM THIS SCHOOL, ARE YOU?
ARE YOU FEEDING THEM? MAY I COME IN AS WELL?

HOORAY!
DO WHATEVER YOU WANT.

COME HERE!

THERE'S NO WAY THEY'LL...
ARE YOU SOME KIND OF IDIOT?



!?

AWE-SOME!
THERE ARE LOTS OF BIRDS.
ISN'T THAT OB-VIOUS?

MY MUSEUM ALSO HAVE LOTS OF ENDANGERED BIRDS. BUT THEY'RE STUFFED.
S..SURE..
OKAY!?
IF YOU HAVE TIME, COME AND PLAY AT MY MUSEUM!
NII-SAN

CHI-SATO!
YOU'RE TAKING TOO LONG! YOU SAID YOU'D TAKE ME TO THE LIBRARY...
AH... IT'S ALREADY THIS LATE, HUH?
CHISATO IDE
SUGIHIKO IDE'S LITTLE SISTER,
COME WITH ME.
I DON'T WANT TO!
GO ON YOUR OWN! YOU USED TO DO THAT, RIGHT?
YOU GET OUT TOO, OKAY?
SO THAT'S THAT.

AT THAT TIME I HAVEN'T REALIZED IT YET...
WELL, I ALREADY FULFILLED MY PROMISE, AND IF HE'S LUCKY, HE CAN ENTER JUNOR HIGH SCHOOL.
THANK YOU!
THAT 10 DAYS FROM AFTERWARD THERE WOULD BE A HUGE DISASTER...
YES!! A GIANT METEOR WOULD STRIKE THE EARTH!!
...JUST KIDDING.
TODAY, I'LL INTRODUCE YOU ALL TO A NEW CLASSMATE.

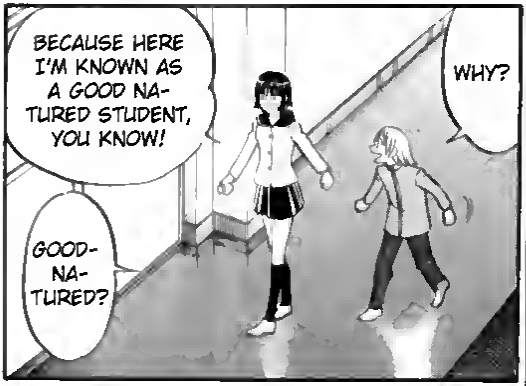
SHINRA SAKAKI.
GRUMPY
どた?

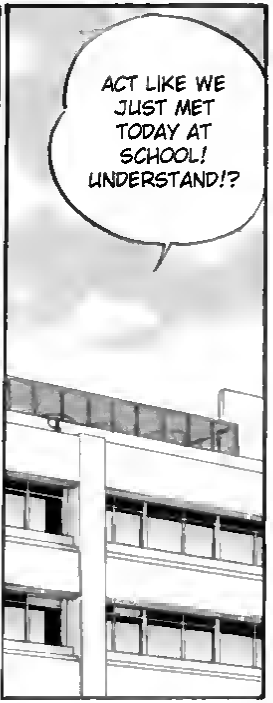
WHAT HAPPENED, NANASE?
THE CHAIR'S LEGS SLIPPED..
?
?
YES, NANASE IS MY NAME. I'M SO VERY PLEASED TO MEET YOU.
ドドド
AH! NEE-SAN...
SFX: DASH
ARE YOUR NERVES GETTING TO YOUR TUMMY? SHALL I HELP YOU TO THE HEALTH OFFICE?
UUUH ...
HUH?
トス
YOU'RE TALKING DIFFERENT FROM HOW YOU USUA...
SFX: SMACK!

GRANDPA! WHAT'S GOING ON?
DON'T SHOUT SO LOUD. IT'S BECAUSE OF THE EXAM RESULT.
HOW COME HE'S IN MY CLASS?
BUT APART FROM THAT, HIS SCORES WERE PERFECT.
HIS JAPANESE LEVEL IS UP TO SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT STANDARD.
HIS SOCIAL SUBJECTS SCORES, EXCEPT FOR HISTORY, WERE TERRIBLE.
AFTER HIS EXAM THE OTHER DAY, I ASKED FOR THE UNIVERSITY GUYS TO TEST HIM IN AN INTERVIEW.

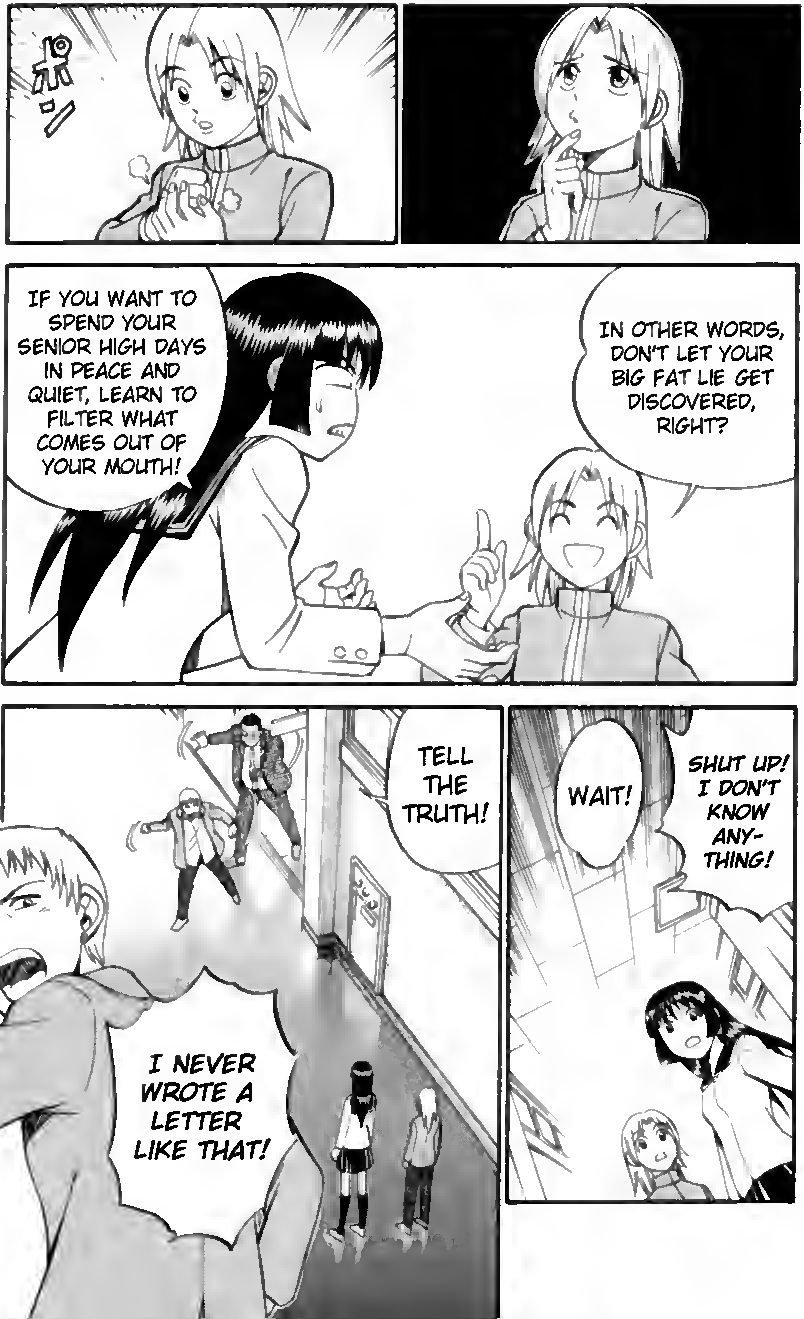
HE'S VERY FLUENT IN BRITISH ENGLISH AND HAS ALSO MASTERED 5 FOREIGN LANGUAGES INCLUDING LATIN.
HIS MATHS, PHYSICS AND CHEMISTRY KNOWLEDGE IS AT THE SAME LEVEL AS A UNIVERSITY STUDENT'S.
HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY AND BIOLOGY ARE EVEN HIGHER THAN THAT.
WHO IS HE REALLY?
IF THAT'S SO, JUST PUT HIM INTO UNIVERSITY...
WITH SUCH A RANDOM RESULT, SENIOR HIGH WOULD BE BETTER, RIGHT?
BESIDES, IF HE GOES IN A CLASS WHERE THERE'S A FRIEND, HE'LL BE HAPPIER TOO.
FRIEND? WHAT FRIEND?

NANASEE-SENPAI!
YOU, WHO ELSE?


WHY?
BECAUSE HERE I'M KNOWN AS A GOOD NATURED STUDENT, YOU KNOW!
GOOD-NATURED?


ACT LIKE WE JUST MET TODAY AT SCHOOL! UNDERSTAND!?

WHAT THAT MEANS IS, I'M NEVER AGGRESSIVE!


IF YOU WANT TO SPEND YOUR SENIOR HIGH DAYS IN PEACE AND QUIET, LEARN TO FILTER WHAT COMES OUT OF YOUR MOUTH!
IN OTHER WORDS, DON'T LET YOUR BIG FAT LIE GET DISCOVERED, RIGHT?
TELL THE TRUTH!
I NEVER WROTE A LETTER LIKE THAT!
WAIT!
SHUT UP! I DON'T KNOW ANY-THING!

SHOWS THE POST OFFICE CLOSE TO YOUR HOUSE.
THE STAMP ON THIS LETTER ...
I TOLD YOU, I ALREADY INTERRO-GATED THEM ALL.
IT'S NOT LIKE I'M THE ONLY STUDENT LIVING IN THAT AREA, RIGHT!
I HEARD YOU'VE TANGLED WITH THE POLICE BEFORE.
YOU THINK YOUR BEHAVIOR WILL MAKE ME GIVE UP?
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING ?
SHUT UP!
WHAT'S THAT HAVE TO DO WITH THIS?
ARE YOU HIDING SOMETHING?

GOOD AFTERNOOON!
AREN'T YOU...
CAN'T YOU READ THE ATMO-SPHERE?
IDIOT!
HA?
STARTING TODAY, I'M A STUDENT HERE
WHY ARE YOU WEAR-ING THAT UNIFORM?
DON'T DISTURB THE INVESTIGATION!
HEY!

THE POLICEMAN IS IN A PICKLE, SO ISN'T IT ALRIGHT IF YOU LEND HIM A HAND?

SHUT UP, YOU DUMB GIRL.
GO BACK TO YOUR CLASS.

TODAY I HAVE TO VISIT AN ACQUINTANCE OF MINE, SO I CAN'T GO.

HEY, HEY!
.....
YOU WANT TO COME TO MY MUSEUM? TODAY IS FINE TOO!

IS YOUR ACQUINTANCE NAMED TATSUMI?
WAIT A MINUTE!
HE GOT HURT DUE TO BEING ASSAULTED BY A ROBBER.
THE PERSON WHO LIVES ON A HILL...
AND SOME TIME AGO SUFFERED A BLOW TO HIS HEAD FROM A ROBBER?
YES ...
WHAT'S YOUR RELATION TO HIM?
UGH, YOU'RE SO NOSEY!

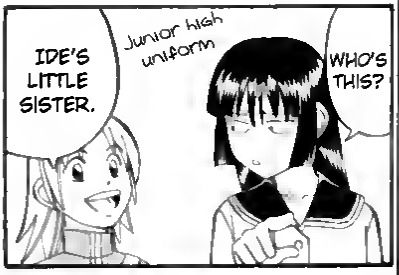
HE'S MY BIRD WATCHING TEACHER!
TATSUMI-SENSEI OPENED A NATURE LOVING COURSE, AND I STUDY WITH HIM. THAT'S ALL!
BIRD WATCH-ING?
YOU!?
WHAT AN ELEGANT HOBBY.
HO HO HO
I TOLD YOU, SHUT UP.

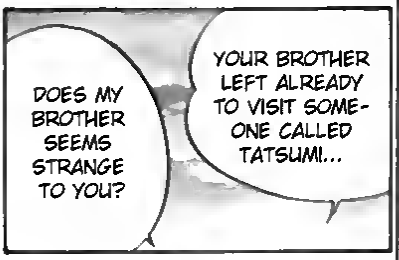
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU CAN CATCH THE CULPRIT.
YOU STUPID GIRL!
YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING, SO DON'T OPEN YOUR MOUTH AND BE SARCASTIC.
KEH!

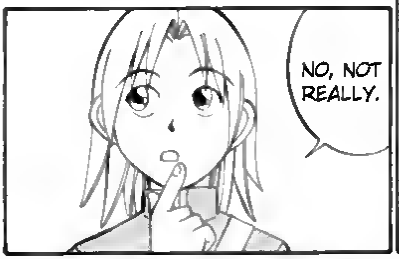
HE'S DEFINITELY HIDING SOME-THING!
IN OTHER WORDS, HE'S RELATED TO TWO CASES THAT HAPPENED AT AROUND THE SAME TIME!
SFX: ROAR
ゴオオ
?
勘忍袋
HE'S GONE.
PLONK

*BAG OF ANGER

SFX: BELL SOUNDS
キーン
コーン
カーン
WA
WA
WA
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
TO THE COMPLEX THAT'S THE CRIME SCENE.
WE'LL CATCH THE CULPRIT AND THROW IT IN HIS SMUG FACE!
BUT I HAVE TO OPEN MY MUSEUM.
IF THERE'S A VISITOR ...
THERE WON'T BE! I GUARANTEE IT!
UMMM ...


IDE'S LITTLE SISTER.
Junior high uniform
WHO'S THIS?


DOES MY BROTHER SEEMS STRANGE TO YOU?
YOUR BROTHER LEFT ALREADY TO VISIT SOME-ONE CALLED TATSUMI...


NO, NOT REALLY.

YOU WERE WITH NII-SAN A WEEK AGO, RIGHT?

YOU'RE A FRIEND OF HIS, RIGHT?

PLEASE WATCH OVER MY BROTHER!
I BEG OF YOU!
?
WATCH OVER HIM?
WHAT...?

DETECTIVE, HAVE YOU CAUGHT THE CULPRIT?
DIDN'T YOU SAY THAT YOU ALREADY HAD AN EYEWIT-NESS?
WELL ...
NO ONE WHO LIVES HERE HATES MR. OOBA.
THAT'S RIGHT, HE'S A GOOD PERSON THAT ALWAYS GREETED US.
BUT THE CARETAKER SAID, THAT DAY THERE WAS NO ONE FROM OUTSIDE WHO CAME IN, RIGHT?
YES.
MAYBE HE SLIPPED BY YOU.
THAT'S IMPOS-SIBLE!
SO THE CULPRIT ...

SFX: THUMP
I SWEAR ON MY LIFE THAT I WILL!
JUST CATCH HIM QUICKLY, SO WE CAN REST EASY.
"THE BLUE BUILDING CASE..."
... BUT EVEN IF I SAY THAT, I'VE GOT ZERO CLUES...
"THE BLUE BUILD-ING?"
... WAIT.
"THE CULPRIT OF THE BLUE BUILDING CASE IS THE PERSON WHO LIVES IN THE ROOM ON THE BOTTOM FLOOR ON THE RIGHT SIDE."
BUT THAT ROOM IS EMPTY, THERE'S NO ONE LIVING THERE.
THE BUILD-INGS ARE PAINTED IN THREE COLORS: RED, BLUE AND WHITE!

FROM HERE YOU CAN SEE THE SIDE PAINTED IN RED AND BLUE.

WHY DOES IT SAY "BLUE BUILD-ING!?"
RED AND WHITE!
AND FROM HERE...

WHAT DOES THIS LETTER MEAN?

HEY! WHAT ARE YOU TWO DOING!
YOU KIDS SHOULD GO HOME AND DO YOUR HOME-WORK!
DON'T KID AROUND! AN INVESTI-GATION IS NOT A GAME!
WE WANTED TO SEE THE CASE'S CRIME SCENE...
HUM? ABOUT THE SIZE OF A SOFT-BALL...
INSPEC-TOR?
HOW BIG WAS IT?
THE ROCK THAT FELL HERE.
THE ROCK WAS THROWN TO THE THIRD FLOOR, AND THEN BOUNCED BACK HERE?

WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT IT, YOU REALLY NEED A LOT OF ENERGY ..
TO THROW A ROCK THAT BIG UP THERE...
EH?
I MEAN, WHY DID THE ROCK FALL DOWN HERE?
THAT'S NOT MY POINT.
HUH?
IF A ROCK THAT HEAVY IS THROWN WITH ALL YOUR MIGHT...
IT SHOULD GO INSIDE THE ROOM, RIGHT?
THAT'S STRANGE ...
AND ANOTHER THING... YOU SAY THERE'S A LETTER FROM THE EYEWITNESS, IS THAT RIGHT?

NOT REALLY.
I'VE BEGUN TO THINK THAT POSSIBLY THE CULPRIT MADE THIS TO CONFUSE THE INVESTIGATION...
THERE'S A FEW SUSPICIOUS POINTS HERE, YOU KNOW.
YOU MEAN THIS?
?
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT?
THAT'S REALLY WRITTEN BY THE EYEWITNESS.
AH!
THAT PERSON WOULDN'T WRITE "BLUE BUILDING" BUT JUST "APARTMENT," RIGHT?
NOT POINTING TO AN EMPTY ROOM'S WINDOW.
IF THE LETTER WAS FROM THE CULPRIT, HE WOULD'VE BLAMED IT ON SOMEBODY ELSE.
EH?
SO, THE QUESTION NOW IS, WHERE DID THE EYEWITNESS SEE THE INCIDENT?
IF THIS IS JUST A PRANK FROM SOMEONE WHO KNEW THE CASE FROM THE NEWSPAPER,

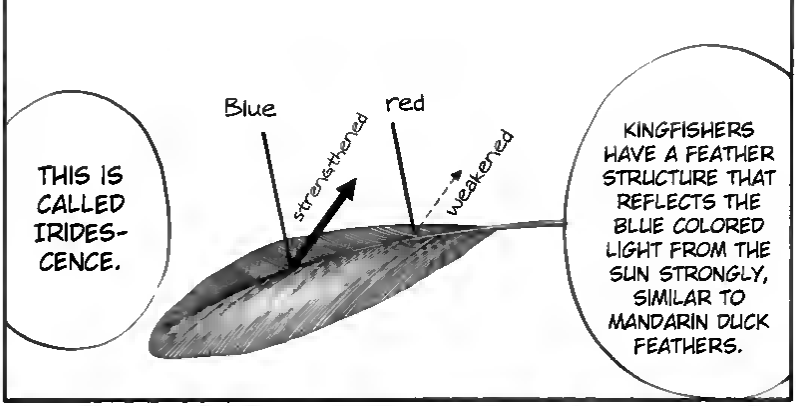
THE STRUCTURE OF THE 4 BUILDINGS MAKES THE CRIME SCENE IMPOSSIBLE TO SEE FROM THE ROAD.
SO, WHERE'S THE PLACE THAT ALLOWS THE CASE TO BE SEEN?
NO.
THE BUILDING RIGHT NEXT TO IT?
SO WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
HE WOULD'VE JUST SAID THE ROOM NUMBER.
IF HE LIVED HERE, RATHER THAN WRITING THE POSITION...
THERE'S JUST ONE POSSIBLE PLACE.

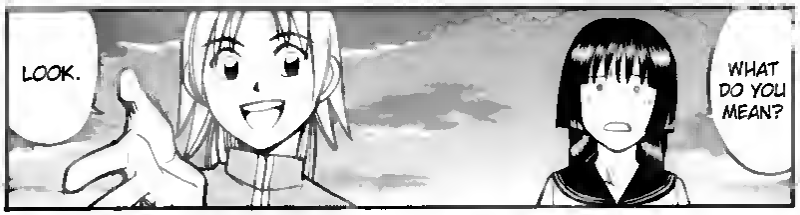
THE ROOF?
NOT EXACT-LY.
TAKE A LOOK AROUND, CAN YOU SEE ANY-THING?
WHAT I'M SAYING IS, IF YOU WANT TO SEE A PLACE THAT'S BETWEEN THESE 4 APARTMENT COMPLEXES, THERE'S NO OTHER PLACE TO SEE IT EXCEPT FROM THE TOP!
THERE!

THE BIG HOUSE UP ON THE HILL!
TATSUMI-SAN'S HOUSE, THE ONE THAT JUST GOT ROBBED!
ISN'T THAT...
TATSUMI-SAN WHO WAS ATTACKED!
SO THE WITNESS IS...
I TOLD THE RESIDENTS THERE ABOUT THE EYEWIT-NESS!!
DAMMIT!! SO THAT'S HOW IT IS!!

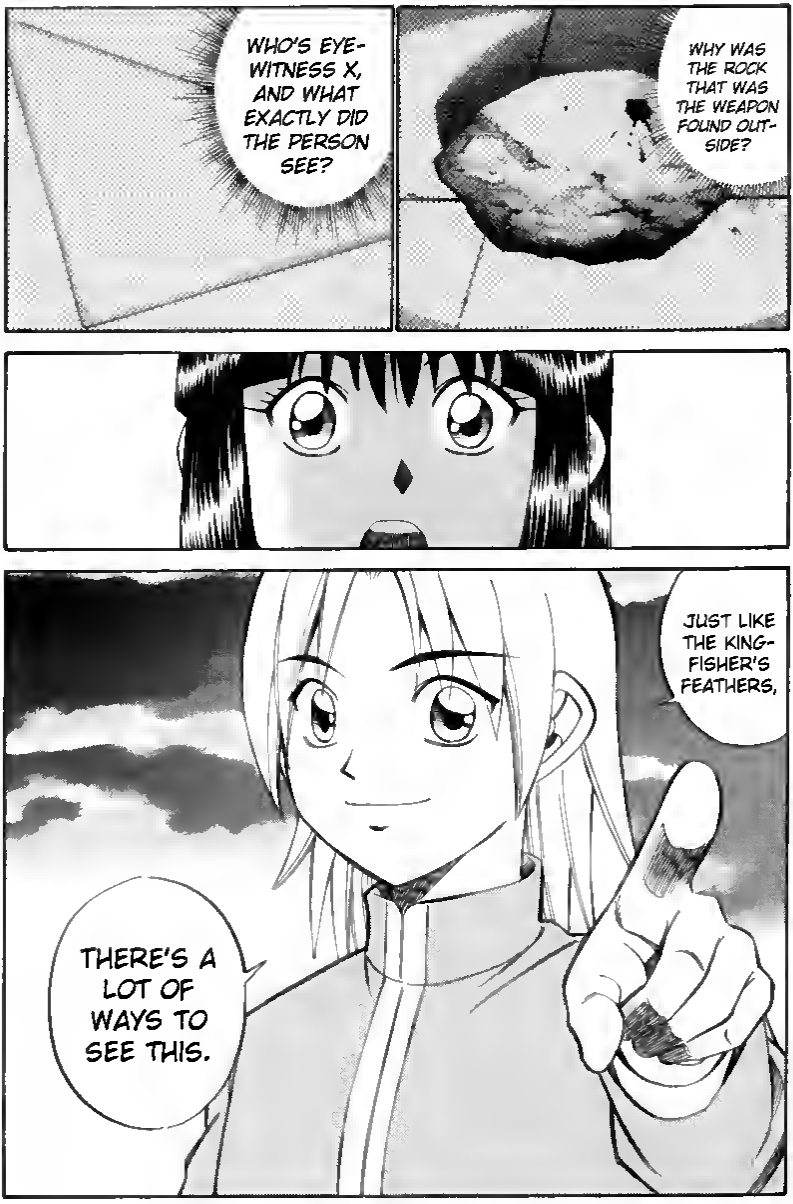
I'VE GOT IT NOW! THANK YOU!
THE CULPRIT MUST'VE REALIZED THAT IT WAS TATSUMI-SAN ...
NO TIME TO WASTE! I HAVE TO GO RIGHT AWAY TO TATSUMI-SAN'S PLACE...
AND ATTACKED HIM TO ENSURE HIS SILENCE!!
SLAM!
SO THAT'S HOW THE CASE ENDS, HUH.
ABOUT THAT... A STUDENT FROM OUR SCHOOL THAT IS CONNECTED TO HIM...
THEN WHERE DID HE GET THE ENVELOPE?
IF TATSUMI-SAN IS INDEED THE WITNESS...
YOU THINK SO?

SO HE'S REALLY CONNECTED TO ALL THIS?
DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE KINGFISHER, NEE-SAN?
IT'S A BEAUTIFUL BLUE-FEATHERED BIRD THAT LIVES ON THE RIVERSIDE.
HOWEVER, IN REALITY, KINGFISHERS DON'T HAVE A BLUE PIGMENT.


THIS IS CALLED IRIDES-CENCE.
Blue
red
strengthened
weakened
KINGFISHERS HAVE A FEATHER STRUCTURE THAT REFLECTS THE BLUE COLORED LIGHT FROM THE SUN STRONGLY, SIMILAR TO MANDARIN DUCK FEATHERS.



NOTE: IRIDESCENCE = AN OPTICAL PHENOMENON WHERE COLOR LOOKS DIFFERENT DEPENDING ON THE ANGLE OF REFLECTION. FOR EXAMPLE, ON SOAP BUBBLES, OR ON THE WINGS OF SPECIFIC TYPES OF BUTTERFLIES. THERE'S ALSO A CAR PAINT MADE WITH THIS EFFECT.


WHO'S EYE-WITNESS X, AND WHAT EXACTLY DID THE PERSON SEE?
WHY WAS THE ROCK THAT WAS THE WEAPON FOUND OUTSIDE?
JUST LIKE THE KINGFISHER'S FEATHERS,
THERE'S A LOT OF WAYS TO SEE THIS.

—Op.03:青(あお)いビル<前編(ぜんへん)> 完(かん)—

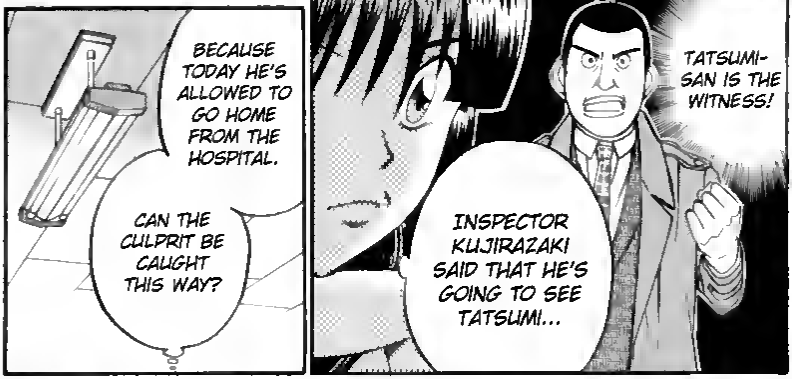
Blue building end

C.M.B. KATOU MOTOHIRO

C.M.B. KATOU MOTOHIRO

Op:03
青(あお)いビル<後編(こうへん)>
Blue building

RUNNING 100 METERS IN 9 SECONDS, PAINTING A PORTRAIT AS BEAUTIFUL AS THE REAL PERSON, TAKING DOWN A BEAR...
IF IT'S NEEDED, WE MUST DEPEND ON THOSE ABLE TO DO SUCH THINGS...
THINGS LIKE THAT ARE IMPOSSIBLE FOR A NORMAL HUMAN TO DO.


BECAUSE TODAY HE'S ALLOWED TO GO HOME FROM THE HOSPITAL.
CAN THE CULPRIT BE CAUGHT THIS WAY?
INSPECTOR KUJIRAZAKI SAID THAT HE'S GOING TO SEE TATSUMI...
TATSUMI-SAN IS THE WITNESS!

IT'S NOT LIKE YOU CAN CATCH THE CULPRIT.
STUPID GIRL.
KRAK

...BUT EVEN SO, IF IT'S MY BRAIN, IT WON'T BE ENOUGH.
PASH

YOU'LL SEE!
BOF

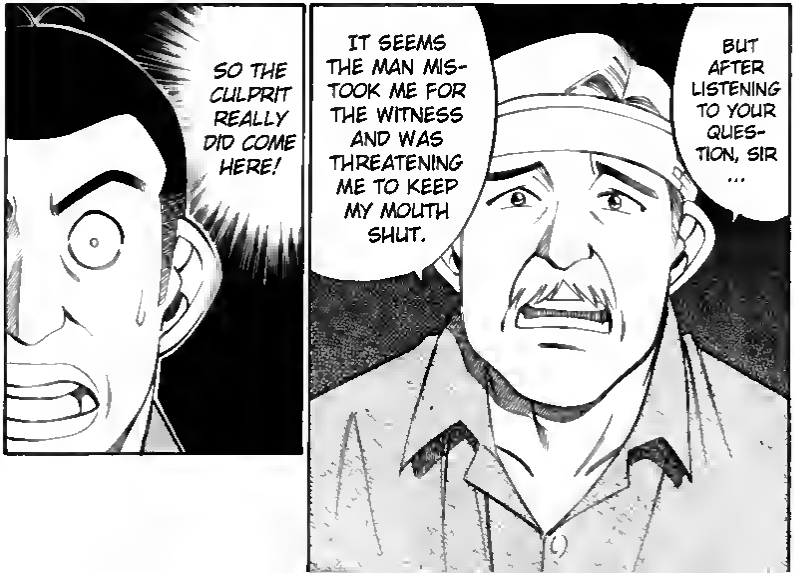
IT LOOKS LIKE I REALLY HAVE TO DEPEND ON SHINRA ...
PUSH
Neuruna
AH, I GOT IT WRONG.
HEY! SAKAKI! WHAT ARE YOU DOING THERE!?
KYA AAA !!
SFX: SMACK!

BUT, THE SCARAB...
DON'T WALK AROUND IN THE MIDDLE OF CLASS!
I THOUGHT IT WAS A NEW TYPE OF SCARAB BEETLE.
HE'S JUST AN IDIOT, RIGHT?
WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH THE NEW KID?
DON'T PLAY WITH A BUG IN DURING A LESSON!
SERI-OUSLY!
SERIOUSLY !?
BUT THE RUMOR SAYS THAT HE ENTERED HERE AFTER A SPECIAL EXAM WITH THE UNIVERSITY PEOPLE, YOU KNOW.
IT FEELS LIKE WE'RE EVEN MORE RI-DICULOUS.
WHEN WE'RE DEPENDING ON SOME-ONE THIS RIDICU-LOUS...
I WONDER WHY ...

THE BLUE BUILDING CASE?
I'M REALLY SORRY.
BUT I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING....
RESIDENT OF THE HOUSE ON THE HILL, SHUNSUKE TATSUMI.
BESIDES, I DON'T SEND THE POLICE ANY LETTERS.

THE EYEWITNESS COULD ONLY SEE THE INCIDENT FROM HERE.
BUT, FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE CRIME SCENE...
YES... BUT THE FACT REMAINS...
THE WINDOW IN THE MIDDLE OF THE BUILDING IS IMPOSSIBLE TO SEE IF NOT FROM A PLACE THIS HIGH.
WHEN I WAS ATTACKED BY THE ROBBER...
THERE WAS ONE STRANGE THING...
AH!
DAMMIT! ALL BECAUSE THE KID SAID THAT...

DON'T SAY ANYTHING STRANGE ...
OR I'LL KILL YOU.
AT FIRST I ASSUMED THAT HE WAS TELLING ME NOT TO SHOUT FOR HELP,

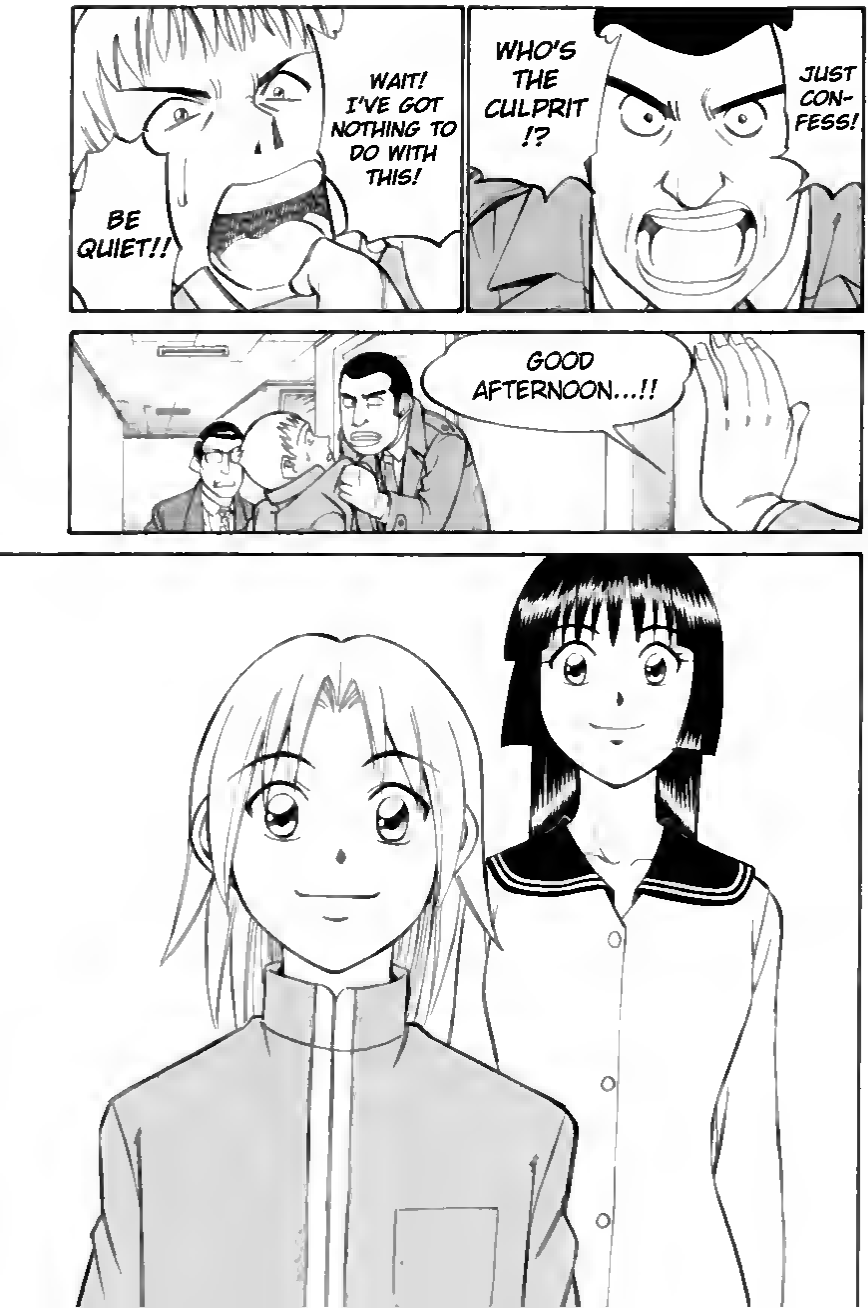

BUT AFTER LISTENING TO YOUR QUES-TION, SIR ...
IT SEEMS THE MAN MIS-TOOK ME FOR THE WITNESS AND WAS THREATENING ME TO KEEP MY MOUTH SHUT.
SO THE CULPRIT REALLY DID COME HERE!

DAMMIT! ANOTHER DEAD END!
BUT, YOU REALLY DID'T SEE ANYTHING?
!
YES...AS I TOLD YOU EARLIER.
THAT'S HOW IT'S WRITTEN ON THE LETTER.
"THE CASE OF THE BLUE BUILD-ING,"
WHY? WHY THE "BLUE BUILD-ING"?
YOU CAN SEE THE RED AND BLUE SIDE.
FROM HERE

SORRY, BUT I'LL BE COMING AGAIN.
SORRY I CAN'T BE OF ANY HELP.
OH YEAH, I HEARD THAT YOU OPENED A NATURE LOVING COURSE?
YES.
I TAUGHT BIRD WATCHING AND ASTRONOMY TO THE KIDS.
HE'S MY BIRD WATCHING TEACHER!
DO YOU REMEMBER WHICH ONE OF YOUR STUDENTS CAME ON THE DAY WHEN THE CASE HAPPENED?
IT SHOULD BE WRITTEN IN THE GUEST-BOOK.

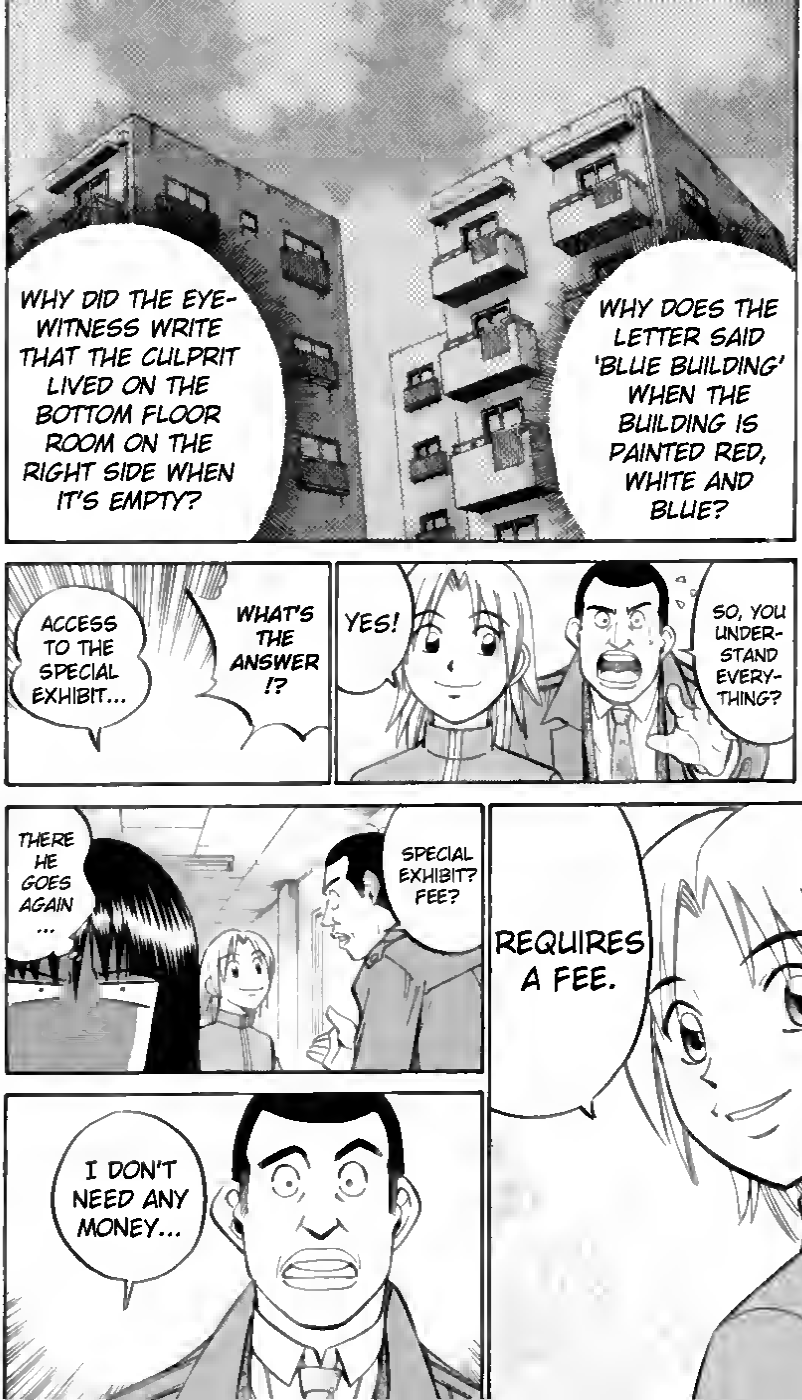
ALLOW ME TO CHECK IT!
SFX: FLIP FLIP
SUGIHIKO IDE
HIM!!
THERE'S NO MISTAKE! THE EYEWITNESS "X" IS SUGIHIKO IDE!
HE'S HIDING SOMETHING ...

SHUT UP!
OFFICER! YOU CAN'T ENTER HERE WITHOUT PERMISSION!
YOU AGAIN?
I FINALLY CAUGHT UP TO YOU, PUNK!
THE ONE WHO SAW THE CASE FROM TATSUMI'S PLACE WAS YOU, WAN'T IT!
AND THEN YOU DISGUISED YOUR IDENTITY AS 'X' AND SENT IT TO THE POLICE!
YOU BOUGHT THE ENVELOPE IN THE SCHOOL SHOP!


WAIT! I'VE GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH THIS!
BE QUIET!!
WHO'S THE CULPRIT !?
JUST CON-FESS!
GOOD AFTERNOON...!!

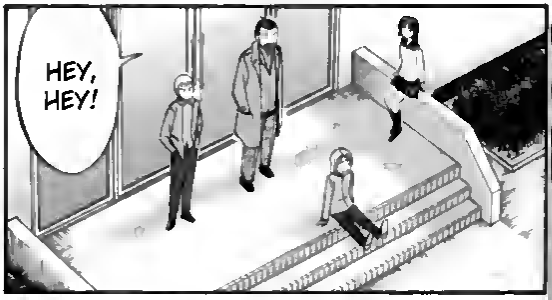
YOU GUYS ...
HOHOHO, THE MOMENT OF TRUTH WHERE THE CULPRIT IS CAUGHT?
DON'T JOKE ABOUT IT!
IT'S YOUR OWN FAULT.
YOUR OWN SISTER ASKED US TO WATCH OVER YOU BECAUSE SHE'S WORRIED.
CHISATO !?
NOW COME ON, TELL ME EVERY-THING.
THAT'S RIGHT, CONFESS !!
ARE YOU GUYS FOR REAL?!
HEY, GUESS WHAT?
I'M KINDA BUSY HERE!!
IN NEW GUINEA THERE'S A BIRD THAT'S CALLED THE HOODED PITHUI.

IT HAS SOMETHING THAT HAS NEVER BEEN FOUND BEFORE IN THE AVES FAMILY.
THAT IS... POISON!
SOMETHING THAT IS UNEXPECTED CAN BE POISONOUS.
DANGER LURKS IN UNKNOWN PLACES.
WHO WROTE THAT LETTER?
WHO REALLY IS THE EYE-WITNESS?


WHY DOES THE LETTER SAID 'BLUE BUILDING' WHEN THE BUILDING IS PAINTED RED, WHITE AND BLUE?
WHY DID THE EYE-WITNESS WRITE THAT THE CULPRIT LIVED ON THE BOTTOM FLOOR ROOM ON THE RIGHT SIDE WHEN IT'S EMPTY?
SO, YOU UNDER-STAND EVERY-THING?
YES!
WHAT'S THE ANSWER !?
ACCESS TO THE SPECIAL EXHIBIT...
REQUIRES A FEE.
SPECIAL EXHIBIT? FEE?
THERE HE GOES AGAIN ...
I DON'T NEED ANY MONEY...

MR. KUJIRAZAKI AND IDE HAVE TO COME TO MY MUSEUM AS VISITORS.
THAT'S THE CONDITION.
US?
TO YOUR MUSEUM!?
IF YOU DON'T WANT TO, IT'S ALRIGHT. I WON'T TALK.
WAIT, WAIT!!
WE'LL DO IT! RIGHT?
YES ...
REALLY?
I'M A MAN OF MY WORD!
SO, WE HAVE OURSELVES A DEAL.

WELCOME TO MY WUNDER-KAMMER.

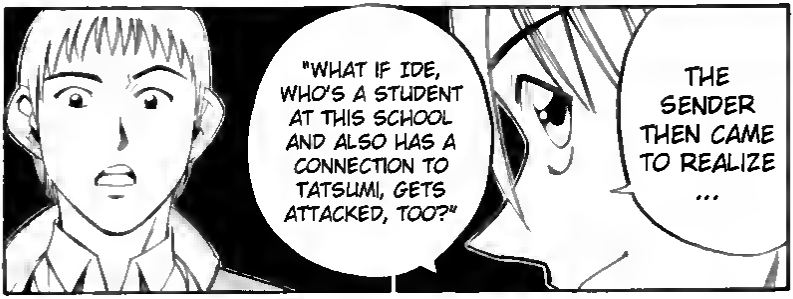

HEY, HEY!

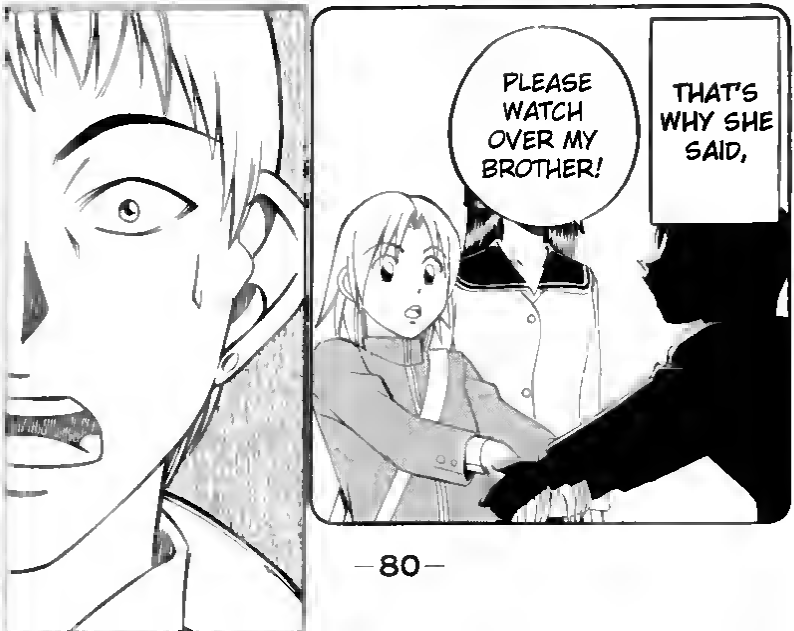
THE CROWS ARE CAWING! WHEN WILL YOU START TALKING?

SFX: CAW CAW

FOR EXAMPLE, THE KALEDONIA CROW THAT LIVES IN AUSTRALIA POKES SMALL TWIGS INTO TREE BRANCHES TO CATCH BUGS.
CROWS ARE SMART BIRDS.
THEY CAN USE TOOLS TO CATCH THE CULPRIT.
?
BUT IN THIS CASE, THERE'S SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T UNDERSTAND HOW TO USE TOOLS.
CROWS UNDERSTAND HOW TO USE TOOLS.
WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH THE CASE?
EYEWITNESS 'X' SAW THE CASE FROM TATSUMI-SAN'S PLACE AND SENT THE LETTER TO THE POLICE.

AND MR. TATSUMI WAS ATTACKED ...
AND THEN, THE INVESTIGATION BROUGHT THE POLICE TO SCHOOL,


"WHAT IF IDE, WHO'S A STUDENT AT THIS SCHOOL AND ALSO HAS A CONNECTION TO TATSUMI, GETS ATTACKED, TOO?"
THE SENDER THEN CAME TO REALIZE ...


PLEASE WATCH OVER MY BROTHER!
THAT'S WHY SHE SAID,

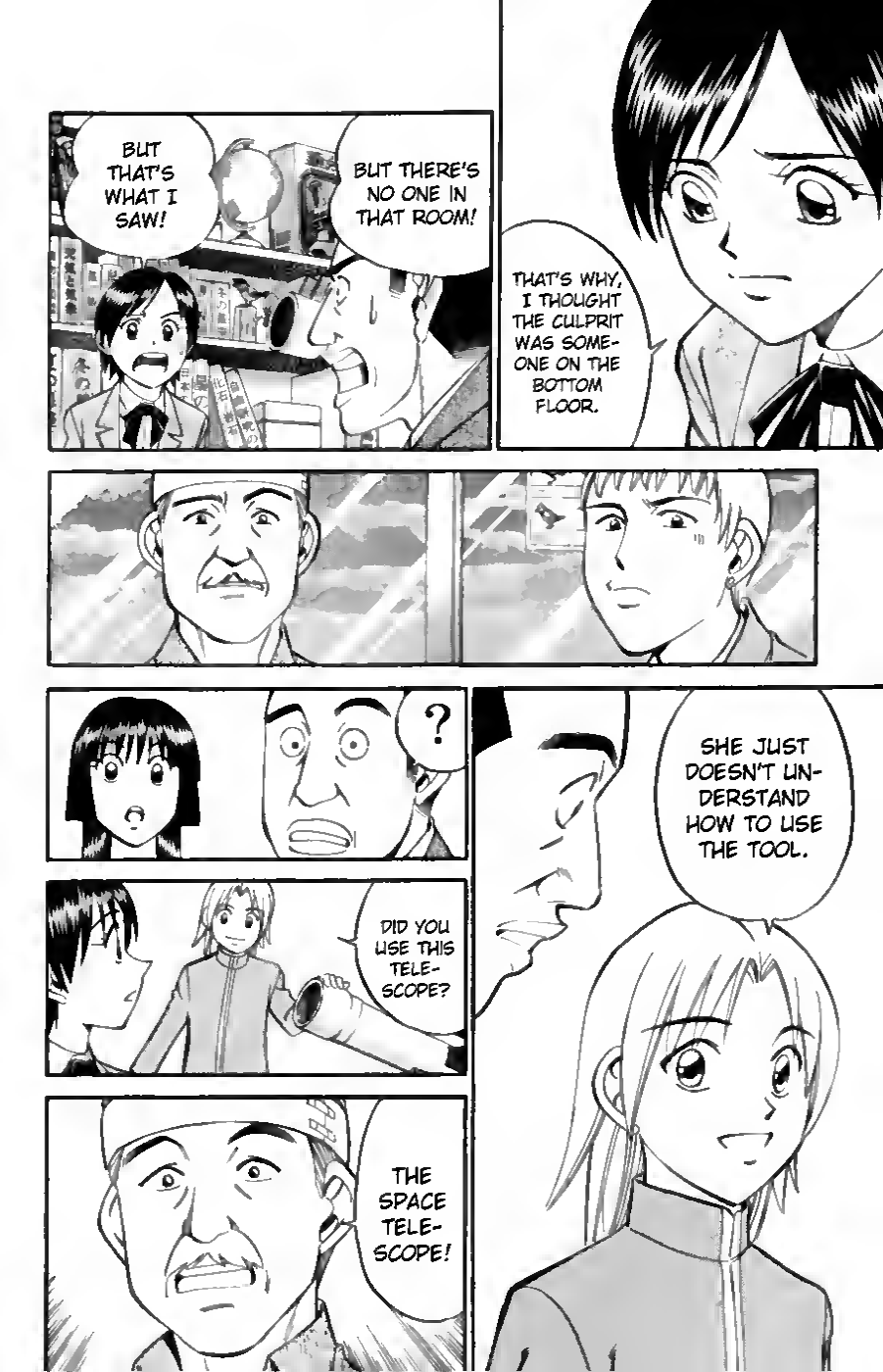
THE EYE-WITNESS FOR THE CASE,
AND THE SENDER OF THE LETTER.
EVEN TODAY SHE CAME BECAUSE SHE'S WORRIED ABOUT HER BROTHER.
CHISATO IDE.

YOU WROTE THE LETTER?
ARE YOU THE EYE-WITNESS !?
I... I...
SFX: DAAK
WHY DON'T YOU SAY ANYTHING!?
DO YOU KNOW HOW...
ARE YOU OKAY?
?
?

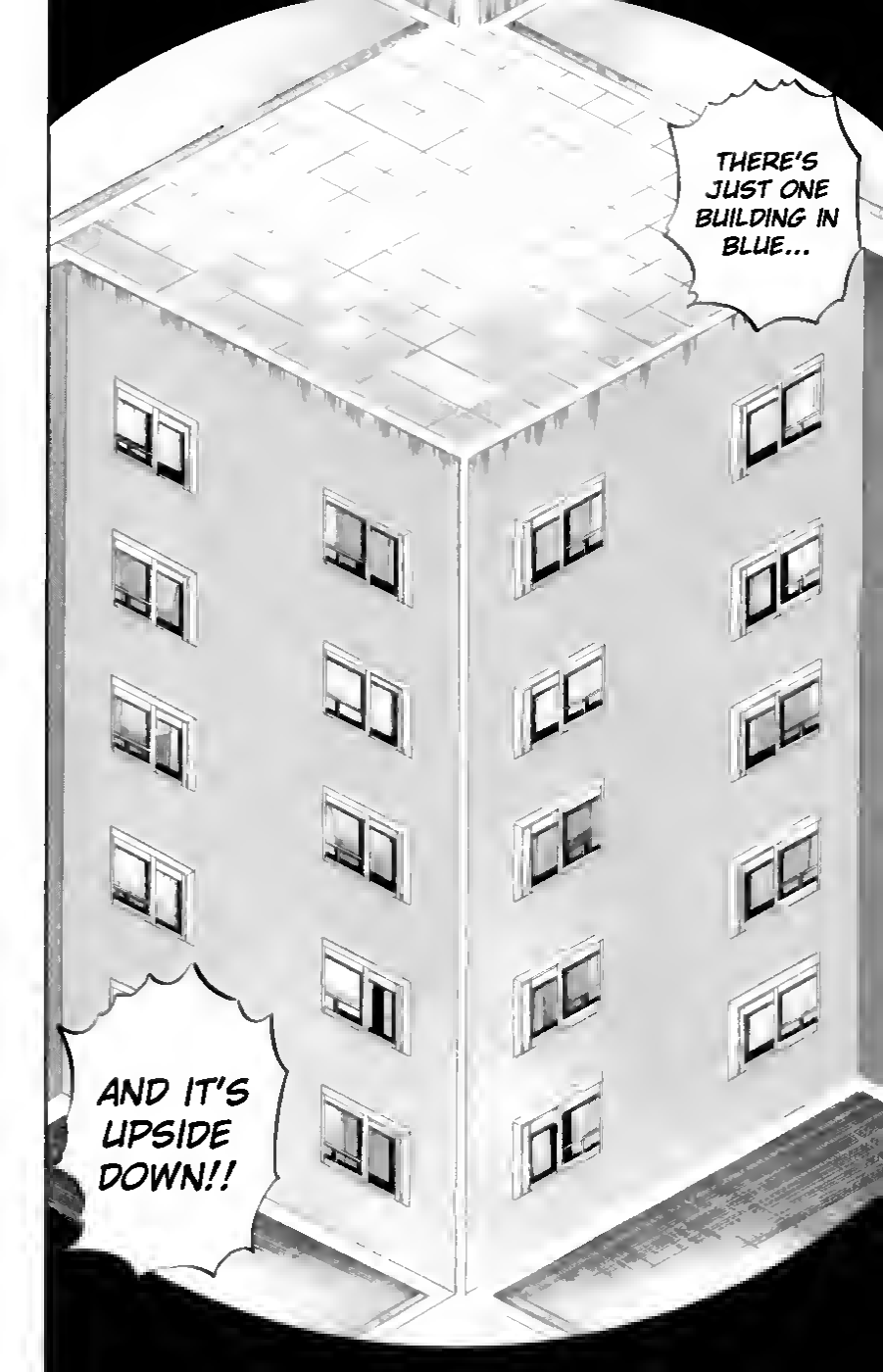
I...DON'T KNOW WHAT ELSE I CAN DO...
YOU MUST BE AFRAID, RIGHT?
I'M AFRAID... THAT THE CULPRIT WILL KILL ME BECAUSE OF THE LETTER...
DON'T YOU REMEMBER?
CAN YOU TELL US EVERYTHING?
PLEASE GO WITH ME.
SHE WASN'T EVEN BRAVE ENOUGH TO GO TO THE LIBRARY ON HER OWN.

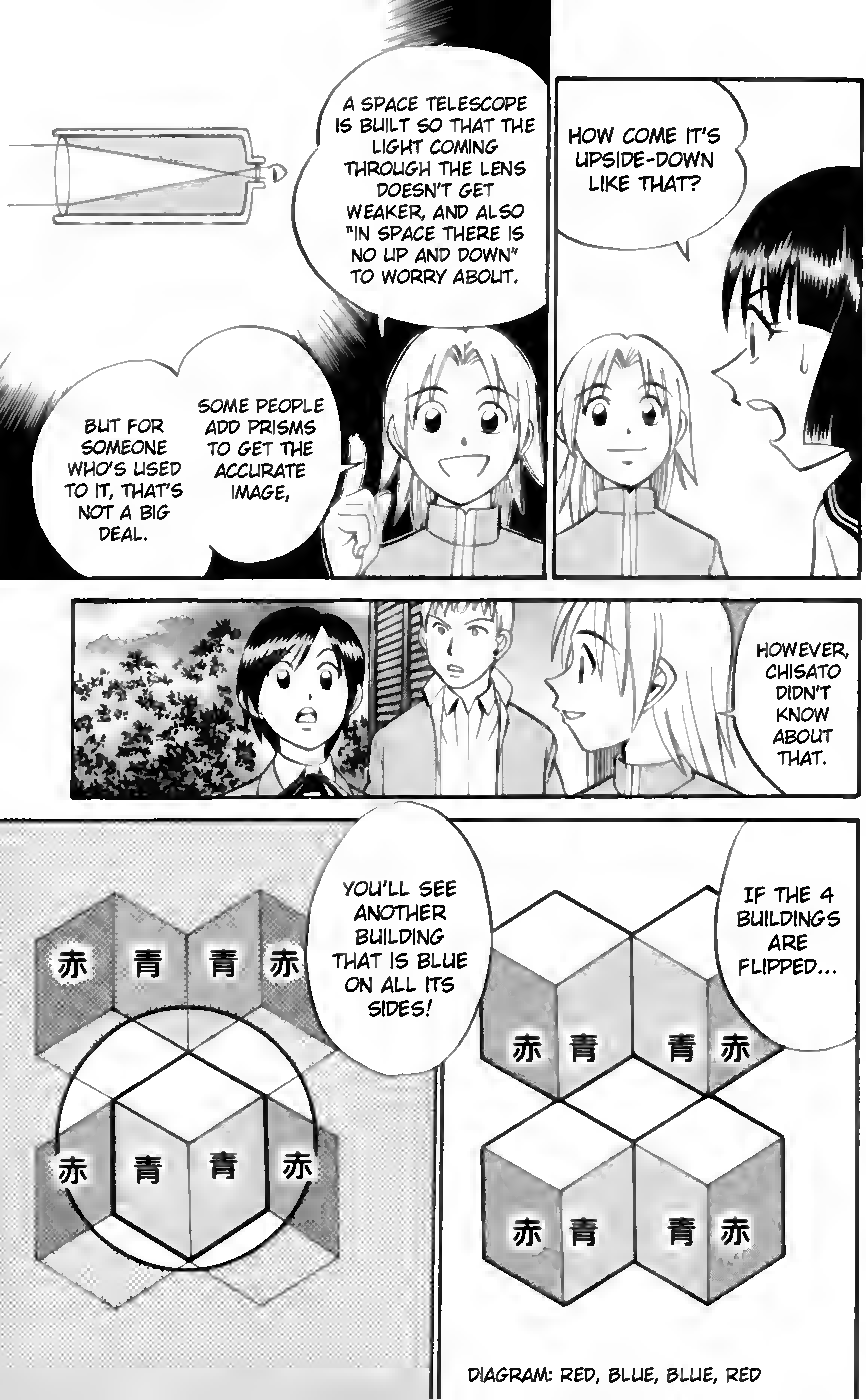
YOU WON'T BE AT EASE UNTIL THIS CASE IS OVER.
NO... YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG.
I'M SORRY.
BACK THEN BOTH OF YOU CAME, BUT ONLY SUGIHIKO WROTE HIS NAME.

WHAT EXACTLY DID YOU SEE?
SO, THEN ...
I SAW THE BLUE BUILDING... AND THEN, SUDDENLY FROM THE RIGHT WINDOW OF THE BOTTOM FLOOR, A ROD WAS EXTENDED OUTSIDE.
I...WAS LOOKING AROUND FROM THE BALCONY, AND THEN TOOK A PEEK THROUGH THE TELESCOPE
THE NEXT DAY, THE NEWSPAPER SAID THAT THE MAN WAS HURT.
AT THE END OF THE ROD WAS A ROCK...LIKE A LONG STONE AXE...AND THEN THE ROCK WAS SWUNG HARD INTO THE THIRD FLOOR WINDOW.


BUT THAT'S WHAT I SAW!
BUT THERE'S NO ONE IN THAT ROOM!
THAT'S WHY, I THOUGHT THE CULPRIT WAS SOME-ONE ON THE BOTTOM FLOOR.
?
DID YOU USE THIS TELE-SCOPE?
THE SPACE TELE-SCOPE!
SHE JUST DOESN'T UN-DERSTAND HOW TO USE THE TOOL.

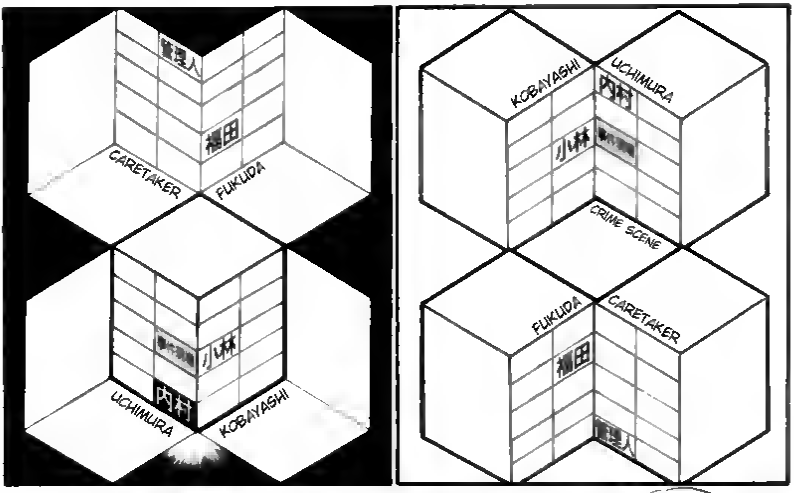
WAIT! EVEN WHEN SEEN FROM HERE...
TO BE CLEAR, LET'S RE-CREATE IT.
THERE'S NO "BLUE BUILDING!"
THE ONLY THING I CAN SEE IS JUST THE RED AND BLUE WALLS.
YET THAT'S WHAT YOU'LL SEE NOW.
!?

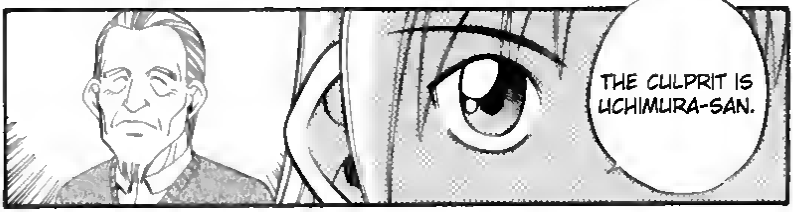

THERE'S JUST ONE BUILDING IN BLUE...
AND IT'S UPSIDE DOWN!!

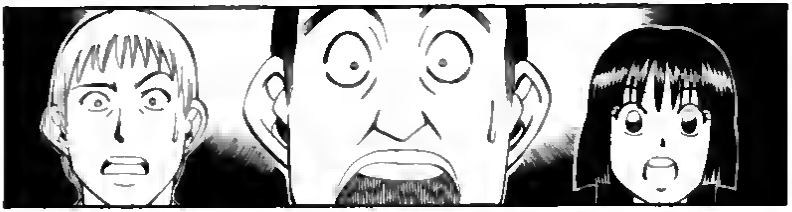

A SPACE TELESCOPE IS BUILT SO THAT THE LIGHT COMING THROUGH THE LENS DOESN'T GET WEAKER, AND ALSO "IN SPACE THERE IS NO UP AND DOWN" TO WORRY ABOUT.
HOW COME IT'S UPSIDE-DOWN LIKE THAT?
SOME PEOPLE ADD PRISMS TO GET THE ACCURATE IMAGE,
BUT FOR SOMEONE WHO'S USED TO IT, THAT'S NOT A BIG DEAL.
HOWEVER, CHISATO DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THAT.
IF THE 4 BUILDINGS ARE FLIPPED...
YOU'LL SEE ANOTHER BUILDING THAT IS BLUE ON ALL ITS SIDES!
赤 青 青 赤
赤 青 青 赤
赤 青 青 赤
赤 青 青 赤
DIAGRAM: RED, BLUE, BLUE, RED

SO, THIS IS WHAT POSSIBLY HAPPENED ...
TAP
TAP
?
BAITED OOBA-SAN TO COME TO THE WINDOW,
FIRST, THE CULPRIT ...
HE THREW A ROCK TIED TO THE END OF A ROPE, SO IT BECAME A DEADLY PENDULUM!!
AND THEN, WITH ALL HIS STRENGTH ...

SO THAT'S WHY THE ROCK WAS OUTSIDE, NOT INSIDE THE VICTIM'S ROOM!!
AFTER-WARD, HE PULLED AND ROLLED UP THE ROPE,
AND THREW AWAY THE ROCK.
WHO LIVES ON THE "RIGHT SIDE OF THE BOTTOM FLOOR?"
NOW, IN-SPECTOR, IF WE FLIP THE BUILDING POSITION,


管理人
福田
CARETAKER
FUKUDA
小林
CRIME SCENE
内村
UCHIMURA
KOBAYASHI


THE CULPRIT IS UCHIMURA-SAN.



*AMAZING (RUSSIAN)
KHORO-SHO.*
HOW'S THE LONDON PHILHAR-MONIC OR-CHESTRA?
A FEW DAYS LATER ...
HUH?
WHAT'S WRONG? ISN'T THE CULPRIT CAUGHT ALREADY?
YES.
INSPEC-TOR KU-JIRAZAKI!

I WAS HELPED A LOT BY YOU GUYS.
SO I THINK IT'S GOOD IF YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED NEXT.
WHY DID UCHIMURA-SAN DO THAT?
THEY SAY THE VICTIM OOBA-SAN IS A VERY NICE GUY, RIGHT? ALWAYS GREETING OTHERS FIRST...
WHY DID YOU DO IT?
.....
THAT GREETING WAS THE PROBLEM.

IN A SHORT TIME, THE APARTMENT WILL BE DEMOLISHED.
I'LL HAVE TO MOVE TO A NEW PLACE.
LOSING OLD FRIENDS.
STARTING NEW RELATIONSHIPS IN A NEW PLACE...
IT WORRIES ME.
BUT HE'S DIFFERENT.
HE'S A LOVABLE GUY, ALWAYS HAVING THE INITIATIVE TO GREET OTHERS FIRST. HE WON'T HAVE ANY PROBLEMS.
SFX: SLAM
SO, YOU'RE JEALOUS?
NO!!
ドン

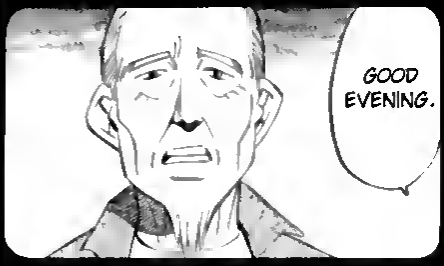
GO..

GOOD MORNING

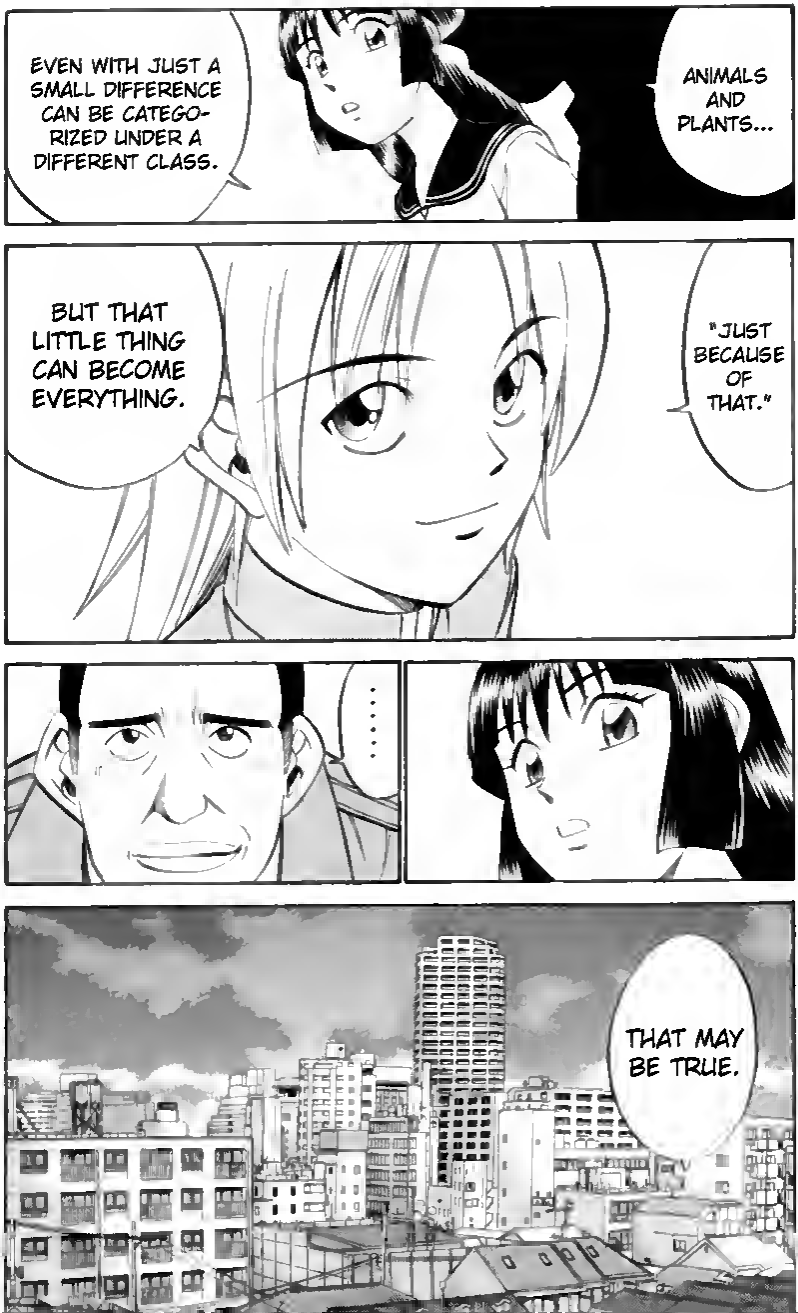
I THOUGHT, IF I COULD GREET HIM FIRST, I'LL BE RELAXED TOO.

HE ALWAYS GREETED ME FIRST!!

AFTER-NOON.
AH...


GOOD EVENING.

OOBA ALWAYS GETS IN MY WAY!
SFX: SLAM
SO, WHAT ELSE COULD I DO!?
EVEN THOUGH TIME IS ALREADY RUNNING OUT!!
JUST ...
BECAUSE OF THAT?


EVEN WITH JUST A SMALL DIFFERENCE CAN BE CATEGO-RIZED UNDER A DIFFERENT CLASS.
ANIMALS AND PLANTS...
BUT THAT LITTLE THING CAN BECOME EVERYTHING.
"JUST BECAUSE OF THAT."
.....
THAT MAY BE TRUE.

I HAVE VISITORS TODAY!!
WOOHOO! WOOHOO!
AWE-SOME ...
IS THIS YOUR MUSEUM?
!!
WHY MUST HE ALWAYS SHOW OFF THAT THING FIRST?
LOOK, LOOK! DRIED POISONOUS FROG!

FOR THE FIRST TIME, SHINRA'S MUSEUM SHOWS SOME ACTIVITY.
IS THIS THING REAL?
THERE'S STILL A LOT OF INTERESTING STUFF, YOU KNOW!
NANA-SE-SENPAI!
SHINRA LOOKS REALLY HAPPY.
SCHOOL IS VERY INTERESTING!
MAYBE SOMEDAY THIS KID'S MUSEUM WILL BE FAMOUS ALL OVER.

—Op.03:青(あお)いビル<後編> 完(かん)—

Blue building

end

C.M.B. KATOU MOTOHIRO

C.M.B. KATOU MOTOHIRO

Blue Building: Part One

-- Text Provider & Translator: Saturn Beaver --
RAW Cleaner: dns.07 -- Proofreader: SpiffyBug --
Typesetter: Tsunao -- QC: Ryuuyasha & Hecko

BIRDS: "WHAT A NICE STATUE, I WONDER IF THERE ARE HIDDEN FOOD IN IT."

THANKS FOR ANZU & DRACO 1988 FOR THE RAWS

Orion Wave

C.M.B

Blue Building: Part Two

-- Text Provider & Translator: Saturn Beaver --
RAW Cleaner: dns.07 -- Proofreader: SpiffyBug
-- Typesetter: Tsunao -- QC: Ryuuyasha

EVERY SCHOOL DETECTIVE STORY
HAS THIS KIND OF DETECTIVE...

THANKS FOR ANZU & DRACO 1988
FOR THE RAWS

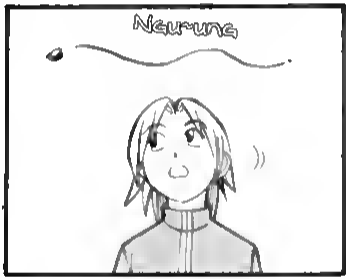
Orion Wave

C.M.B

Blue Building: Part Three

-- Text Provider & Translator: Saturn Beaver --
RAW Cleaner: dns.07 -- Proofreader: SpiffyBug
-- Typesetter: Tsunao -- QC: Ryuuyasha --

SHINRA: OH LOOK! A BUG, MUST CATCH!



THANKS FOR ANZU & DRACO 1988
FOR THE RAWS

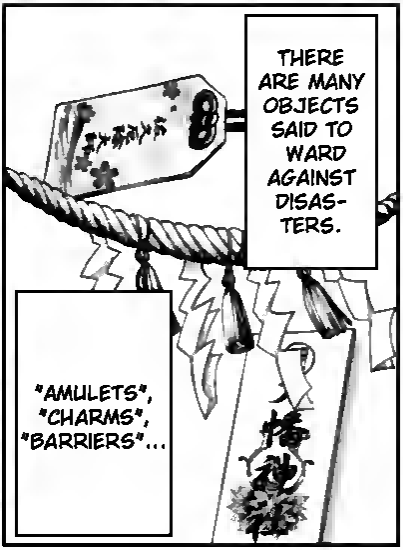
Orion Wave

C.M.B

Colored by Gunn
Op.03
青(あお)いビル<後編(こうへん)>
Blue building

"CURSES", "DISASTERS", "MISFORTUNES"...
EVEN THOUGH THE DARKNESS OF NIGHT HAS BEEN VANQUISHED BY THE LAMPS' LIGHTS, MEN STILL CAN'T VANQUISH THEIR FEARS ABOUT THOSE THINGS.

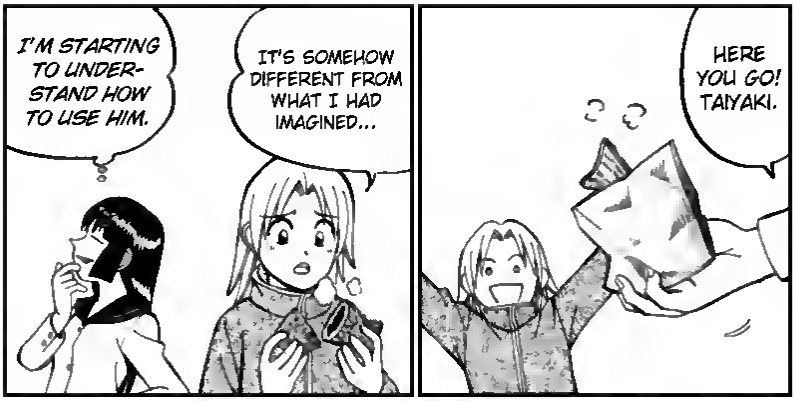
DOES SUCH MYSTERIOUS POWER REALLY EXISTS?

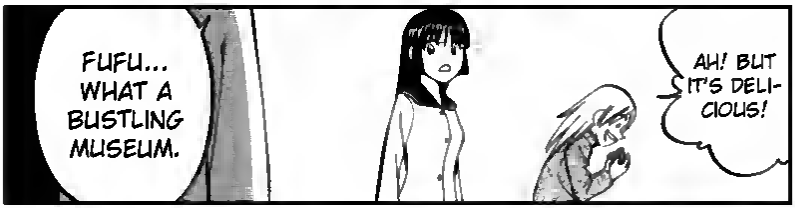

THERE ARE MANY OBJECTS SAID TO WARD AGAINST DISASTERS.
"AMULETS", "CHARMS", "BARRIERS"...

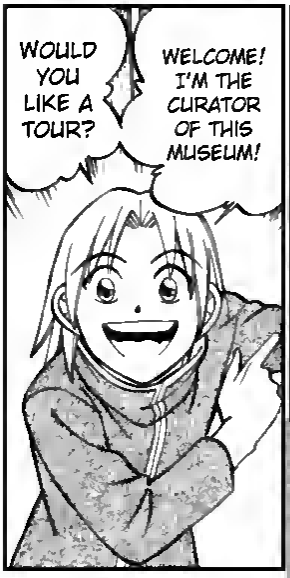
YET, I'VE SEEN IT WITH MY OWN EYES... A PERSON WHO DIED FROM A "CURSE" IN A HORRIFYING CASE...
Op.04
呪いの面<前編>
The cursed mask

Op.04
呪いの面〈前編〉
The cursed mask

THAT'S IT, SHINRA.
NOW JUST TRANSLATE THAT ENGLISH SENTENCE INTO JAPANESE.
LIKE THIS, NANASE-SAN?
OK! HOME-WORK DONE!
IN THAT CASE, KEEP YOUR PRO-MISE NOW!
THE RARE BLACK-BELLIED TAI FISH!

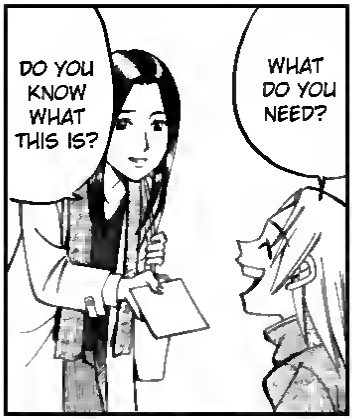

I'M STARTING TO UNDER-STAND HOW TO USE HIM.
IT'S SOMEHOW DIFFERENT FROM WHAT I HAD IMAGINED...
HERE YOU GO! TAIYAKI.


FUFU... WHAT A BUSTLING MUSEUM.
AH! BUT IT'S DELI-CIOUS!

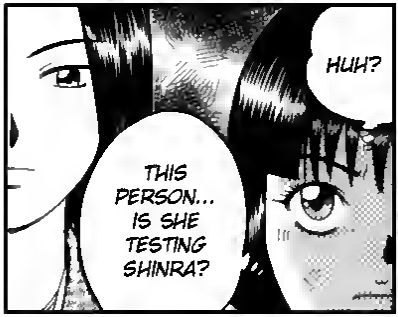

WOULD YOU LIKE A TOUR?
WELCOME! I'M THE CURATOR OF THIS MUSEUM!

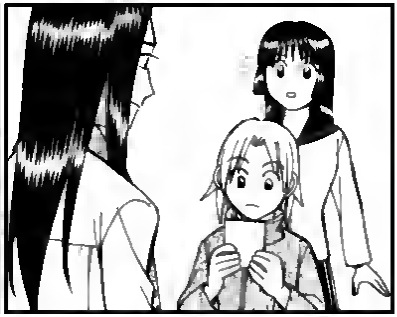
WHEN DID SHE..?
HUH?

I'M YAMAGISHI, AN ETHNOLOGIST.
YAMAGISHI KEIKO, ETHNOLOGIST.
NO, THANK YOU.
I HAVE SOMETHING ELSE IN MIND...
WOW... HOW GORGEOUS...
INSPECTOR KUJIRAZAKI TOLD ME "DON'T BE SURPRISED WHEN YOU SEE THE MUSEUM'S CURATOR"...
STILL, I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO BE THIS YOUNG.


DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS IS?
WHAT DO YOU NEED?

INSPECTOR KUJIRAZAKI?
I WONDER WHY...


HUH?
THIS PERSON... IS SHE TESTING SHINRA?

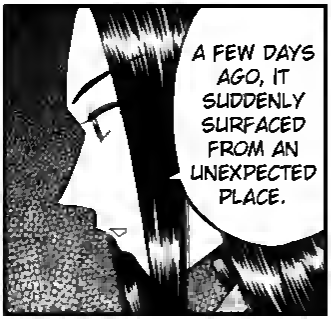


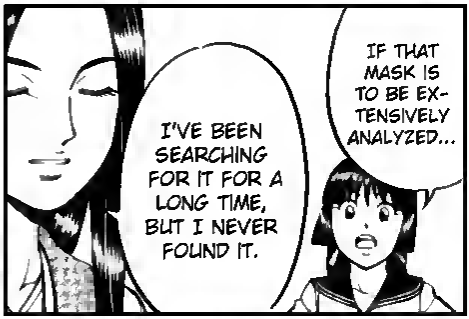
WHAT IS IT?
A NOH MASK USED IN NOH PLAYS.

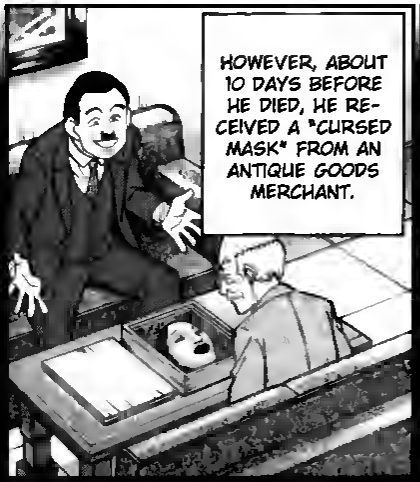
THIS IS A "MUD-STONE" MASK, USED TO REPRE-SENT A WOMAN WHO HAS BEEN BETRAYED.
IT'S USED IN PLAYS SUCH AS "AOI NO UE" AND "KANAWA."
.....
BUT THERE'S SOMETHING ODD ABOUT THIS ONE...
THAT'S THE "CURSED MASK."
IT'S SAID THAT ANYONE WHO OWNS IT WILL DIE AS A RESULT.

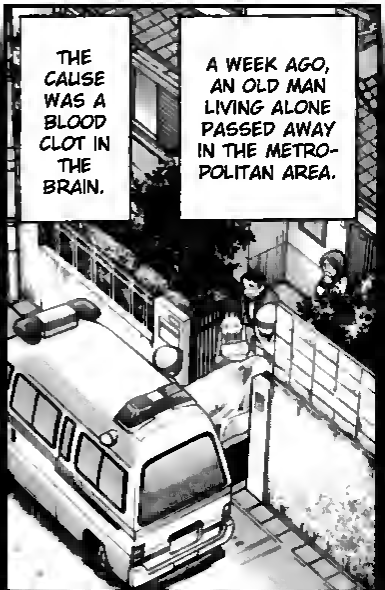
OF COURSE, I DON'T BELIEVE "CURSES" CAN KILL PEOPLE EITHER.
NO WAY! THAT SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF TV...
HOWEVER, ONE THING I KNOW FOR SURE:
15 YEARS AGO, A MAN DIED BECAUSE OF THIS MASK.

DOES THE "CURSE" REALLY EXISTS?
OR IS THERE ANOTHER REASON?


A FEW DAYS AGO, IT SUDDENLY SURFACED FROM AN UNEXPECTED PLACE.

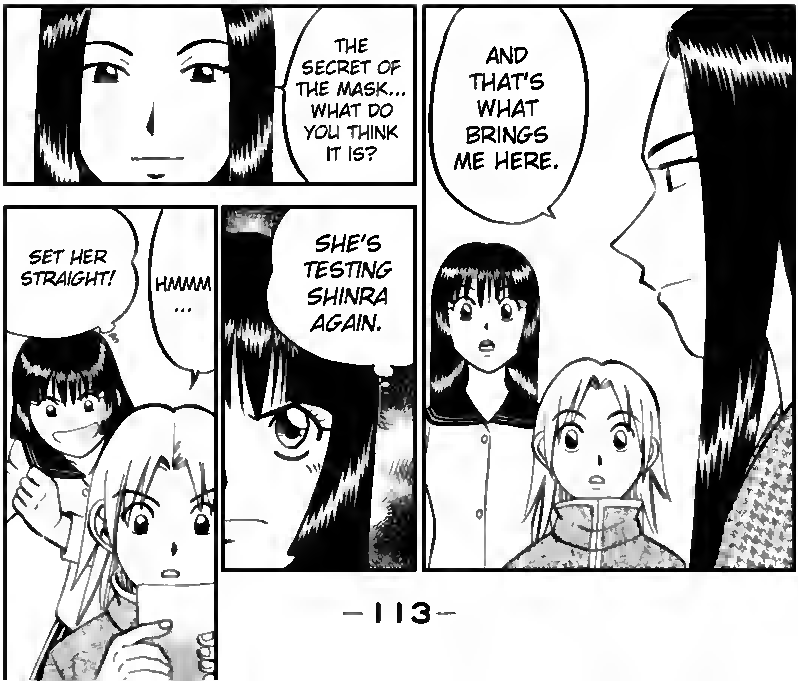

I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR IT FOR A LONG TIME, BUT I NEVER FOUND IT.
IF THAT MASK IS TO BE EXTENSIVELY ANALYZED...

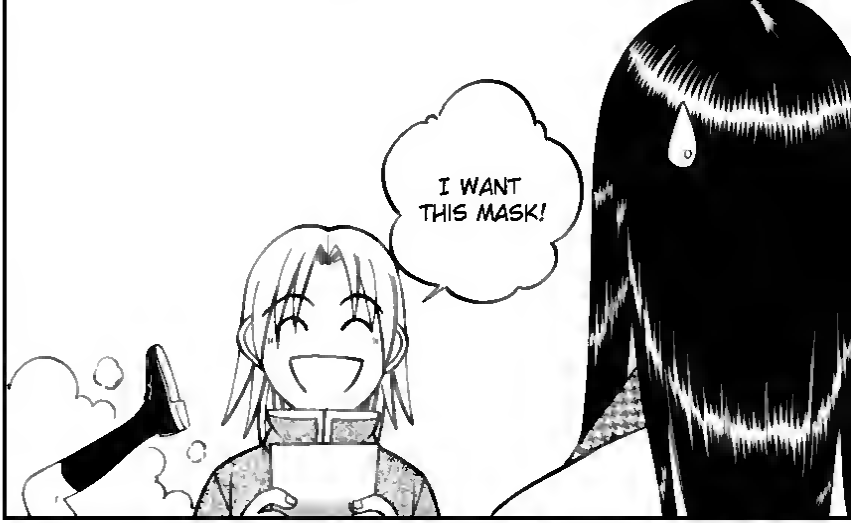

HOWEVER, ABOUT 10 DAYS BEFORE HE DIED, HE RECEIVED A "CURSED MASK" FROM AN ANTIQUE GOODS MERCHANT.

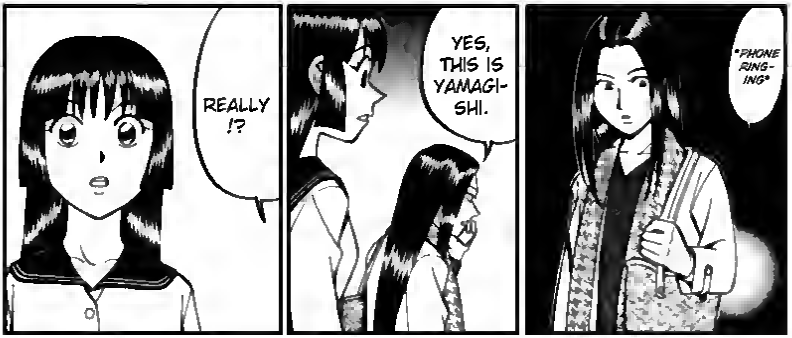

THE CAUSE WAS A BLOOD CLOT IN THE BRAIN.
A WEEK AGO, AN OLD MAN LIVING ALONE PASSED AWAY IN THE METROPOLITAN AREA.

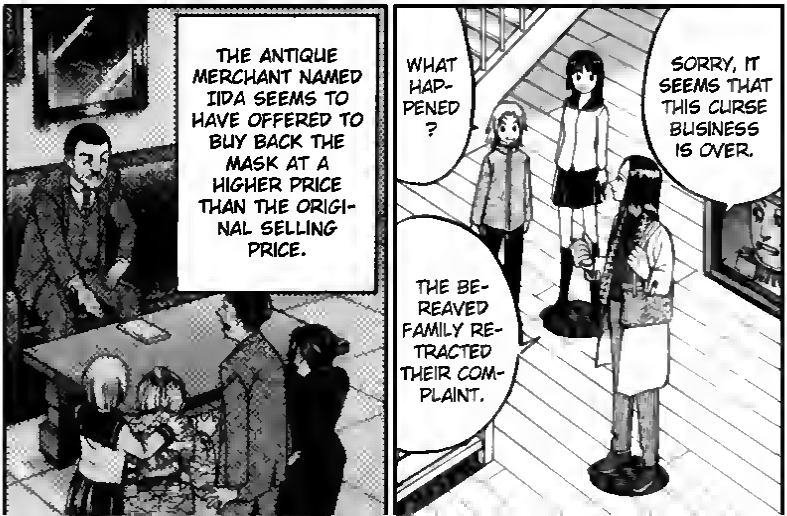
THEY REPORTED THE MERCHANT TO THE POLICE, BECAUSE THEY BELIEVED SELLING SOMETHING LIKE THAT WAS EQUAL TO MURDER.
THE FAMILY WAS FURIOUS.
THE POLICE, WHO ARE AT DEAD END, ASKED ME FOR ADVICE.
LIABILITY IS WITH THE BUYER, RIGHT?
BUT THE MERCHANT SAID ...
BUT I DON'T BELIEVE IN STUFF LIKE THAT EITHER...
THAT MAKES SENSE ...
STILL, I WOULD LIKE TO HEAR YOUR OPINION
I KNOW MURDER BY "CURSE" IS NOT SOMETHING ONE CAN BUILD A CASE ON
THIS MASK ..!

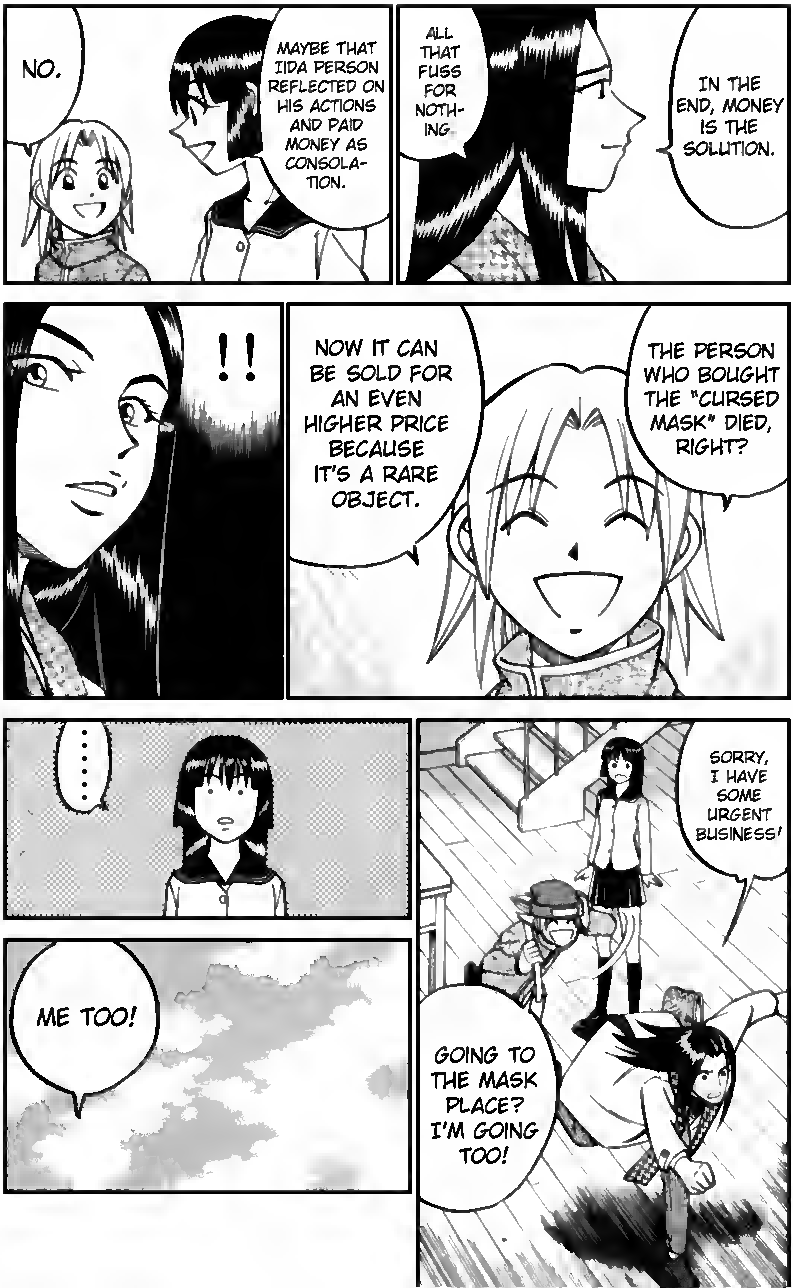
MAYBE HE'LL KNOW SOMETHING...
PERHAPS I SHOULD ASK *HIM* ABOUT THIS...
WHO ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
WHAT'S HIS NAME?


THE SECRET OF THE MASK... WHAT DO YOU THINK IT IS?
AND THAT'S WHAT BRINGS ME HERE.
SHE'S TESTING SHINRA AGAIN.
HMMM...
SET HER STRAIGHT!


I WANT THIS MASK!


REALLY !?
YES, THIS IS YAMAGI-SHI.
PHONE RING-ING


THE ANTIQUE MERCHANT NAMED IIDA SEEMS TO HAVE OFFERED TO BUY BACK THE MASK AT A HIGHER PRICE THAN THE ORIGI-NAL SELLING PRICE.
WHAT HAP-PENED ?
SORRY, IT SEEMS THAT THIS CURSE BUSINESS IS OVER.
THE BE-REAVED FAMILY RE-TRACTED THEIR COM-PLAINT.


IN THE END, MONEY IS THE SOLUTION.
ALL THAT FUSS FOR NOTHING
MAYBE THAT IIDA PERSON REFLECTED ON HIS ACTIONS AND PAID MONEY AS CONSOLATION.
NO.
THE PERSON WHO BOUGHT THE "CURSED MASK" DIED, RIGHT?
NOW IT CAN BE SOLD FOR AN EVEN HIGHER PRICE BECAUSE IT'S A RARE OBJECT.
!!
SORRY, I HAVE SOME URGENT BUSINESS!
GOING TO THE MASK PLACE? I'M GOING TOO!
ME TOO!

SIGN: IIDA ANTIQUE SHOP
飯田古物商店
HE'S OUT?
THE MANAGER WON'T BE BACK FOR A WHILE.
WHERE DID HE GO?
THERE ARE TWO PEOPLE INTERESTED IN BUYING THE RARE NOH MASK...
SO THEY WENT TO MEET EACH OTHER AND DISCUSS WHO WILL GET IT...

面打ち
安房左衛門
AWA SAEMON, MEN (MASK) SCULPTOR.
ARE THEY ALL HERE?
THIS IS THE STUDIO OF A WORLD FAMOUS SCULPTOR WHO'S CALLED A GENIUS IN HIS FIELD.
ODD, ISN'T IT? A NOODLE RESTAURANT OUT HERE, IN THE MIDDLE OF MOUNTAINS?
NOODLE RESTAURANT?

THAT WAS OBVIOUSLY A JOKE, OKAY.
SIS, THE WORD "MEN" THERE MEANS MASK, YOU KNOW?
WELL, DOESN'T "MEN" STAND FOR NOODLE?
ARE YOU THE ONE WHO SAID THAT YOU WANTED TO BUY THE MASK?
HO ...
Mask sculptor,
Awa Saemon.

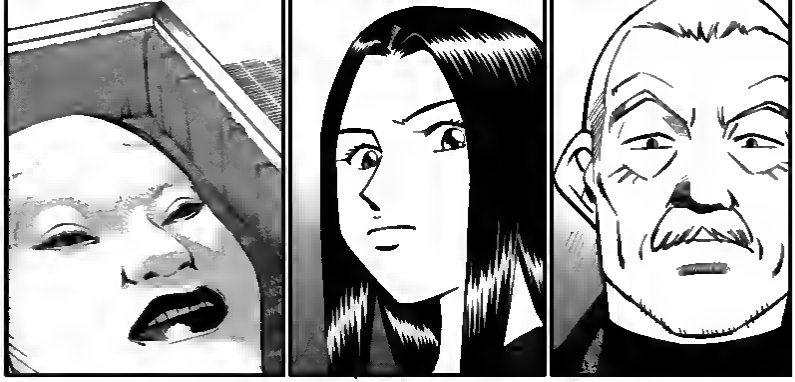
SENSEI, AREN'T YOU ALSO INTERESTED IN THE "CURSE"?
YES, I'M INTERESTED IN IT.
YOU HAVE A STRANGE HOBBY.
THEN, WHY DO YOU WANT TO BUY IT?
DON'T TALK NONSENSE! IT'S JUST A REGULAR MASK MADE FROM WOOD.
I MADE THAT MASK.

IT'S A FAILED PIECE OF WORK THAT I WANT TO DESTROY.

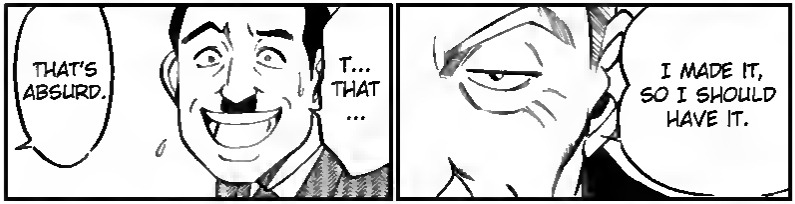
Antique goods merchant, Iida Shigekazu.

Noh dancer, Enomoto Seimei.

BRING OUT THE MASK!
WE'RE ALL HERE, CAN WE BEGIN?



NOW THAT'S JUST NON-SENSE.
HAHA HA!
I'D LIKE TO PROPOSE FOR THE HIGHEST BIDDER TO...


THAT'S ABSURD.
T... THAT ...
I MADE IT, SO I SHOULD HAVE IT.

ギロ
YOU EAT RICE AND WEAR CLOTHES THAT OTHER PEOPLE MADE.
IF THE ONE WHO MAKES IT IS THE OWNER, THEN YOU'RE NOTHING MORE THAN A THIEF.

IT'S LOOKS A LOT LIKE THE ONE I SAW IN THE PHOTO-GRAPH...
OI! DON'T TOUCH IT WITH YOUR DIRTY HANDS!
BUT IT'S NOT VERY WELL MADE.
YOU JUST SHUT YOUR MOUTH!
WHAT DID YOU SAY? I'LL SUE YOU FOR OB-STRUCTION OF BUSINESS!!
I'M SORRY! HE'S JUST A DUMB KID. HE CAN'T EVEN HANDLE "SIT" OR "STAY".
THAT KID IS RIGHT.

A MASK NEEDS TO SHOW THE REAL FACE OF A PERSON WHO IS FREE FROM THOUGHT,

BUT I DON'T FEEL THAT WITH THIS MASK.

I ALSO SEE IT AS SOMETHING THAT'S NOT UP TO THE STANDARDS OF THE RENOWNED GENIUS, AWASENSEI.

I WANT TO BUY THE MASK BECAUSE OF THE RUMORS SURROUNDING IT.

IN THAT CASE, YOU DON'T NEED TO BE HERE, RIGHT!?

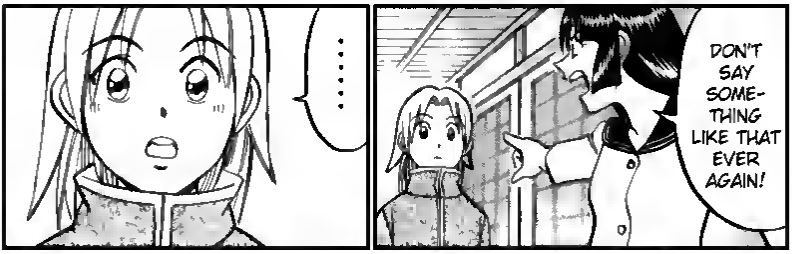
THERE IS NO "CURSE."

BUT IT'S NOT A "CURSE."
IT'S TRUE THAT 15 YEARS AGO, SOMEONE DIED BECAUSE OF THAT MASK.
THE CAUSE WAS SOMETHING ELSE.
I BID 2 MILLION YEN.
2 MIL-!?
I'D LIKE TO INVESTIGATE THE MASK
AND REVEAL ITS SECRETS.
I BID 2.5 MILLION.

YOU'RE ALL IDIOTS.
AND YOU...
RAISING THE PRICE HERE MEANS FOLLOWING HIS WHIMS, RIGHT?
IN THAT CASE, ME TOO!
THE PRICE IS AT 2.5 MILLION! THERE'S NO NEED TO SPEND MORE MONEY THAN THAT!
TOMORROW THE THREE OF US WILL DISCUSS WHO WILL TO BUY IT.
WHAT!?
I ALSO WANT THAT MASK!

YOU KNOW THAT SOME-ONE DIED BECAUSE OF THAT MASK, RIGHT!?
WHY YOU LITTLE!
WHY NOT?
DON'T SAY "I WANT IT" SO EASILY!
HUMANS LIVE BY ADMITTING THAT BOTH HAVE THEIR PRICE.
ISN'T IT STRANGE TO NOT WANT TO BUY IT BECAUSE YOU FEAR FOR YOUR LIFE?
JUST LIKE A HUMAN LIFE,
OBJECTS ALSO HAVE VALUE.

YOU'RE THE STRANGE ONE!

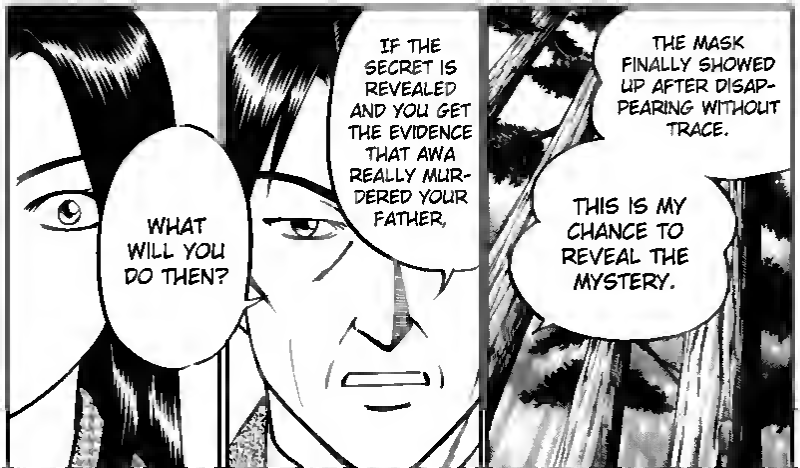

.....
DON'T SAY SOME-THING LIKE THAT EVER AGAIN!

THIS IS BAD! YAMAGISHI-SAN IS STAYING THE NIGHT HERE, SO SHE CAN'T DRIVE ME HOME!!
I MISSED THE LAST BUS!!
UGH!!
I'LL JUST LEAVE HIM ALONE AND GO HO-...
DAMMIT! WHAT'S WITH THAT GUY ANYWAY?

WHY ARE YOU GETTING IN MY WAY?
ガラ
I NEED TO CALL MY FRIENDS TO MAKE AN ALIBI AND CALL HOME TO SAY THAT I'M SAYING AT MY FRIENDS' PLACE!
YOU KNOW FULL WELL THAT I'M LOOKING FOR THAT MASK TOO!
THEY KNOW EACH OTHER?
WORRIED? STOP JOKING AROUND!
I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOU.

MY FATHER WAS MURDERED BY AWA!
THROUGH THAT MASK!

EH!?


THE MASK FINALLY SHOWED UP AFTER DISAPPEARING WITHOUT TRACE.
THIS IS MY CHANCE TO REVEAL THE MYSTERY.
IF THE SECRET IS REVEALED AND YOU GET THE EVIDENCE THAT AWA REALLY MURDERED YOUR FATHER,
WHAT WILL YOU DO THEN?

YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND.
THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU!
BACK THEN...
I WAS STILL AFRAID WHEN I WAS DANCING ON MY OWN ON THE STAGE.
ALONE, I WAS HOLDING BACK MY TREMEN-DOUS FEAR.
BEHIND THE MASK, UNSEEN BY THE AUDIENCE...
AM I DANCING IT PROPERLY?

JUST HOW ARE THEY SEEING ME?
EVERY-BODY...

WAS THE ONLY THING THAT I COULD SEE CLEARLY.
SOME-HOW, YOUR FACE

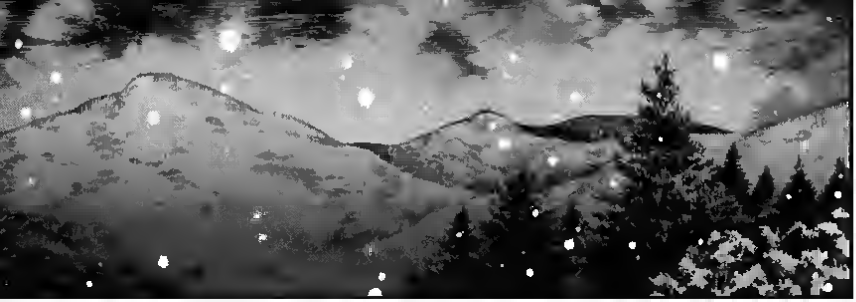
THEY WERE LOVERS!?
NO WAY!
AFTER THAT, YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN BY MY SIDE... I WAS NEVER ALONE AGAIN.
YOUR EYES WATCHED MY DANCE.
IF YOU DISAP-PEAR...
I'LL BE ALONE AGAIN.
A MOUNTAIN GOAT WILL ALWAYS CLIMB MOUNTAINS.
BUT I...
I KNOW.

NO MATTER WHAT, HE WILL NOT CHANGE.
EVEN IF I TRY TO STOP YOU, YOU WILL CONTINUE TO CLIMB.
THAT'S WHY I HAVE TO BUY THE MASK.
HMM, IT SEEMS THAT THE PROBLEM IS QUITE COMPLICATED.
BUT IF YAMAGISHI-SAN'S FATHER WAS MURDERED BY AWA-SAN...
PLEASE WAIT A BIT LONGER!
I WILL DEFINITELY PAY BACK THOSE 3 MILLION YEN! SO PLEASE JUST WAIT ONE MORE WEEK!

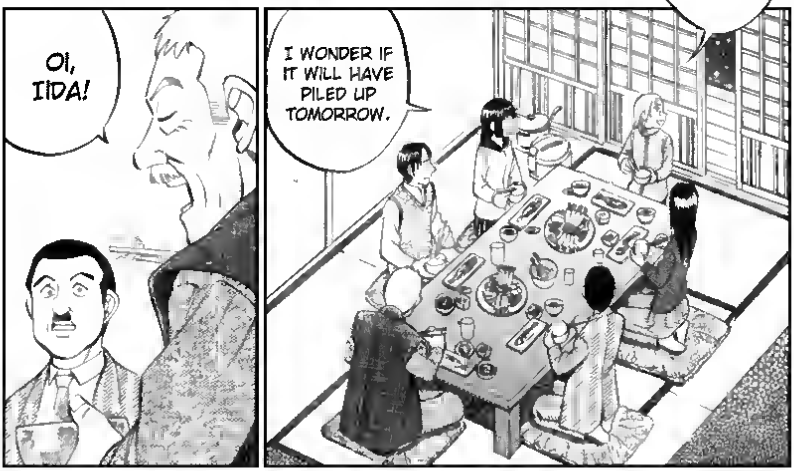
I'LL GET THE MONEY!
SO DON'T TAKE OVER MY SHOP...
JUST ONE WEEK!
DAMMIT !!
I HAVE TO DO SOME-THING...
.....
AH!
THE MASK SCULPTING STUDIO.
HEH, SO THESE ARE THE KIND OF TOOLS HE USES.

THIS ROOM IS SURROUNDED BY WALLS, HUH?
IS THAT WINDOW WAY UP THERE THE ONLY PLACE LETTING IN LIGHT?
FOR THE SAKE OF BEING ABLE TO CONCENTRATE.
A KAGAMI ITA FOR THE NOH STAGE!
THEN, I EMPTY MY THOUGHTS.
WHEN I SCULPT, I LOCK THE DOOR TO BANISH ANY DISTURBANCE.
ALMOST 200 PLANKS OF WOOD WERE USED, SO THAT THIS PLACE COULD LOOK AS SIMILAR TO THE REAL THING AS POSSIBLE.
HOWEVER, BECAUSE IT'S OLD, THE WIND BLOWS THROUGH THE GAPS, IT'S HARD FOR THE ELDERLY.
HE SAID THAT HE WANTED TO SCULPT MASKS ON THE STAGE.
IT WAS MADE BY THE PREVIOUS GENERATION.
HOO.
FOR A KID, YOU SURE KNOW A LOT.

LONG AGO, THERE WAS A KNOW-IT-ALL LIKE YOU.
SOMEBODY I DISLIKED.
BUT THAT'S NOT THE CASE FOR THAT MASK, RIGHT!?
BUT, YOU'RE RIGHT.
MY EVIL INTEN-TIONS
ARE ATTACHED TO THAT MASK.



THE SNOW IS FALLING AGAIN.


OI, IIDA!
I WONDER IF IT WILL HAVE PILED UP TOMORROW.

LEND ME THE MASK FOR JUST ONE NIGHT.

I THOUGHT SCULPTING A MASK, WHILE LOOKING AT THAT ONE, WOULD BE INTERESTING.
WHAT FOR?
IF I DON'T, I'LL BE CALLED A THIEF AGAIN.
DON'T WORRY, I'LL RETURN IT TOMORROW.
WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN YOUR FATHER AND AWA-SAN?
YAMA-GISHI-SAN.
WHAT IS IT?

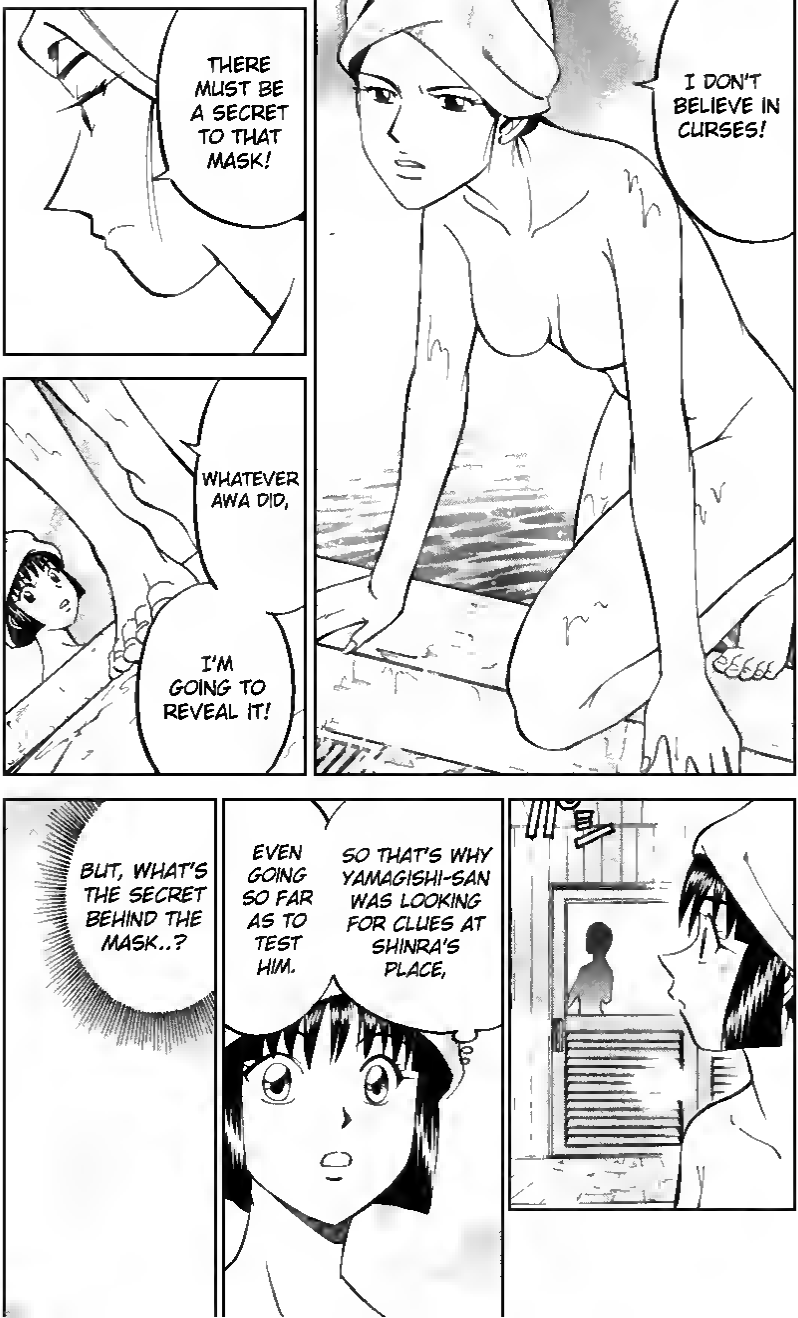
YOU WERE LISTENING?
EHEHE, A BIT.
MY FATHER WAS A CRITIC.
.....
HE ALWAYS TRIED TO SPREAD THE CHARM OF NOH AND KABUKI TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC...
WORDS ARE A MEANS TO PASS ON TRADITIONS TO FUTURE GENERATIONS.
WE HAVE TO PUT SOUL INTO OUR WORDS. DO YOU UNDERSTAND, KEIKO?
NOT REALLY.
HAHAHA! WELL, YOU'RE STILL A KID.
TO ME, HE WAS A KIND FATHER.

3 YEARS AFTER THAT...

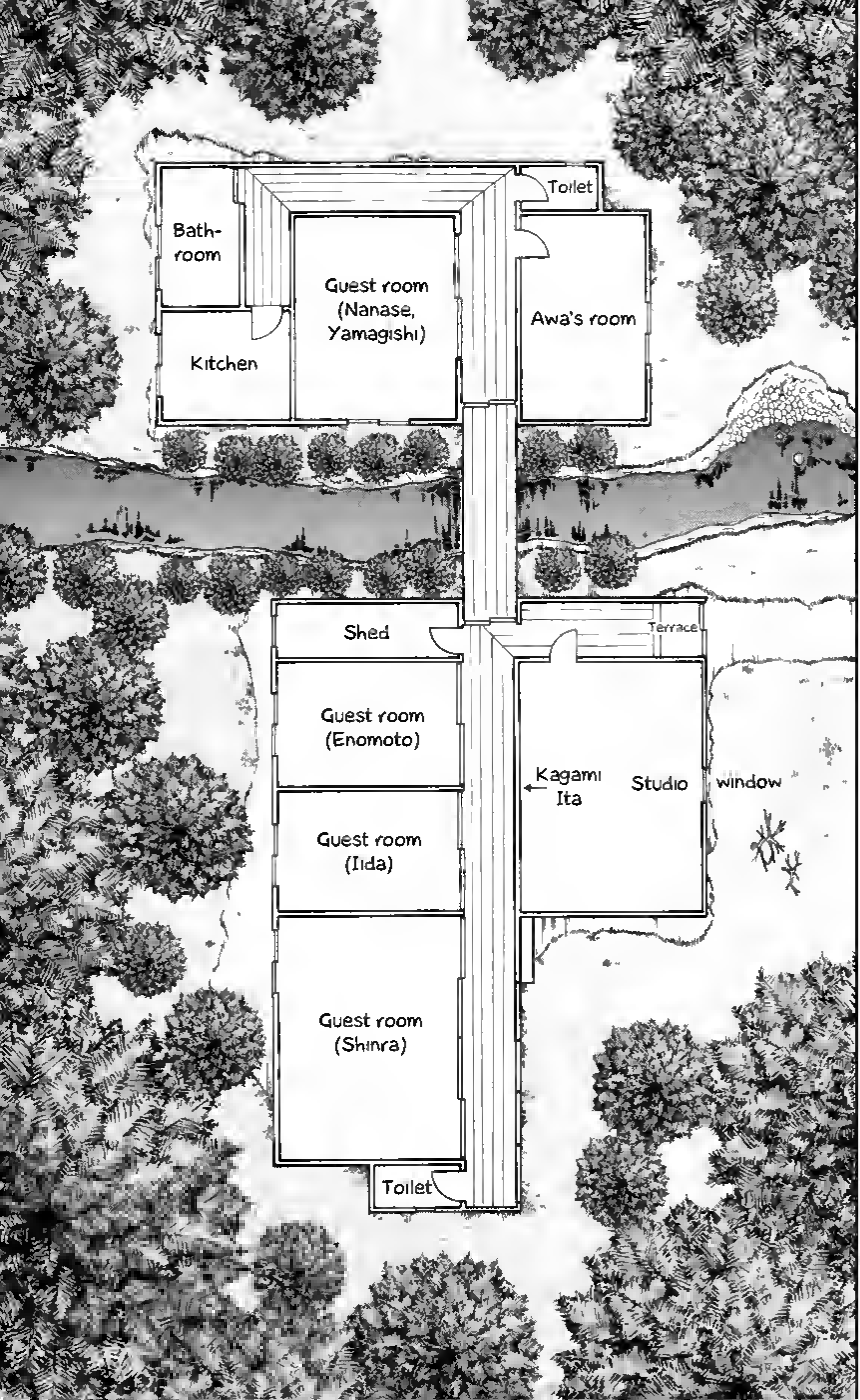
ONE DAY, AWA SENT A MASK THAT HE SCULPTED TO DAD.

睡眠薬

I WAS CURSED BY THE NOH MASK.


THERE MUST BE A SECRET TO THAT MASK!
I DON'T BELIEVE IN CURSES!
WHATEVER AWA DID,
I'M GOING TO REVEAL IT!
BUT, WHAT'S THE SECRET BEHIND THE MASK..?
EVEN GOING SO FAR AS TO TEST HIM.
SO THAT'S WHY YAMAGISHI-SAN WAS LOOKING FOR CLUES AT SHINRA'S PLACE,

A NOH MASK THAT INVITES DEATH...
HOW CAN THAT BE?


Toilet
Bath-
room
Guest room
(Nanase,
Yamagishi)
Awa's room
Kitchen
Shed
Terrace
Guest room
(Enomoto)
Kagami
Ita
Studio
window
Guest room
(Iida)
Guest room
(Shinra)
Toilet

MOR-
NING.
THE SNOW PILED UP QUITE A LOT.
HUH?
MOR-
NING.
DON'T TELL ME HE WAS SCULPT-ING ALL NIGHT?
MAYBE HE FELL ASLEEP.
THERE'S LIGHT COMING FROM INSIDE THE STUDIO?

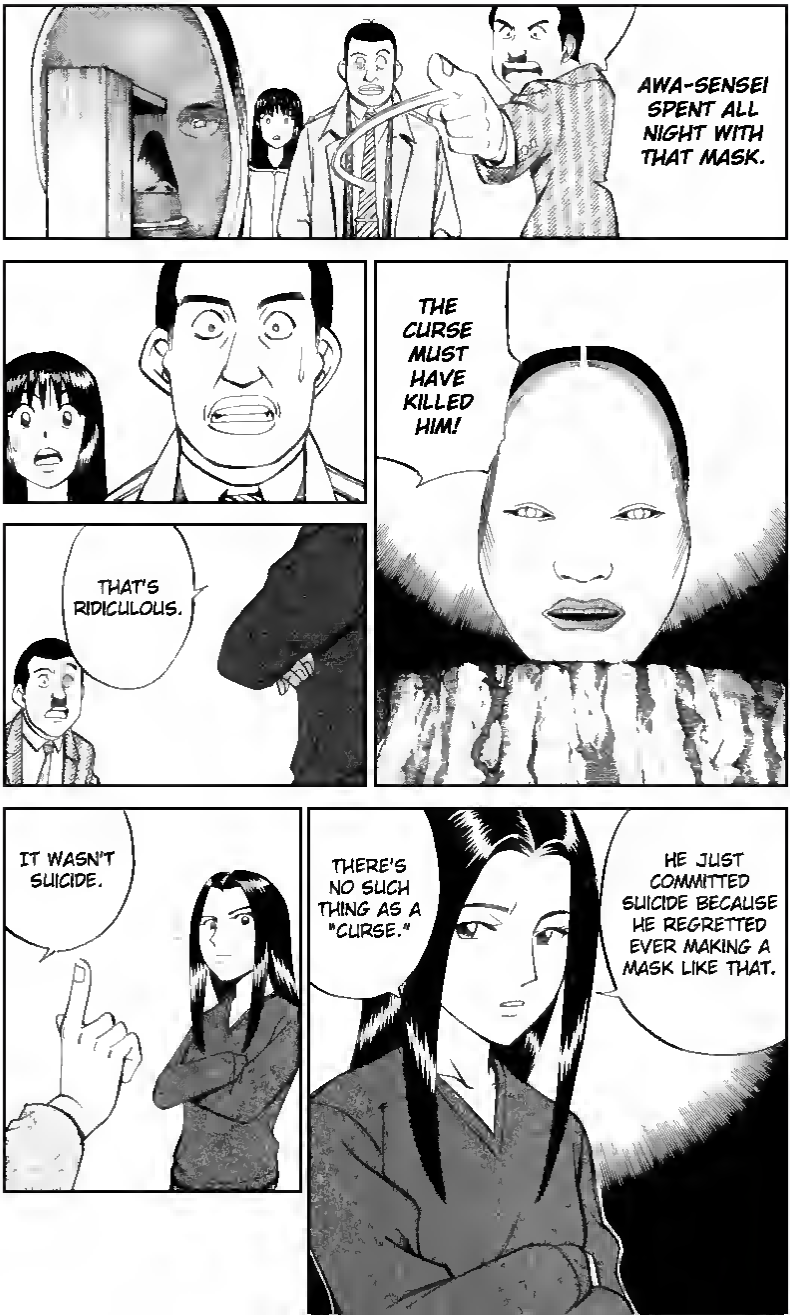
SEE, LOOK.
AWA-SAN!
YOU'LL CATCH A COLD!
AWA-SAN, PLEASE WAKE UP!
HE'S NOT ANSWER-ING.
.....
IT'S LOCKED.
LET'S TRY FROM THE OUTSIDE!!

WHERE'S A LADDER?
MAKE WAY!
SUPER AWESOME!

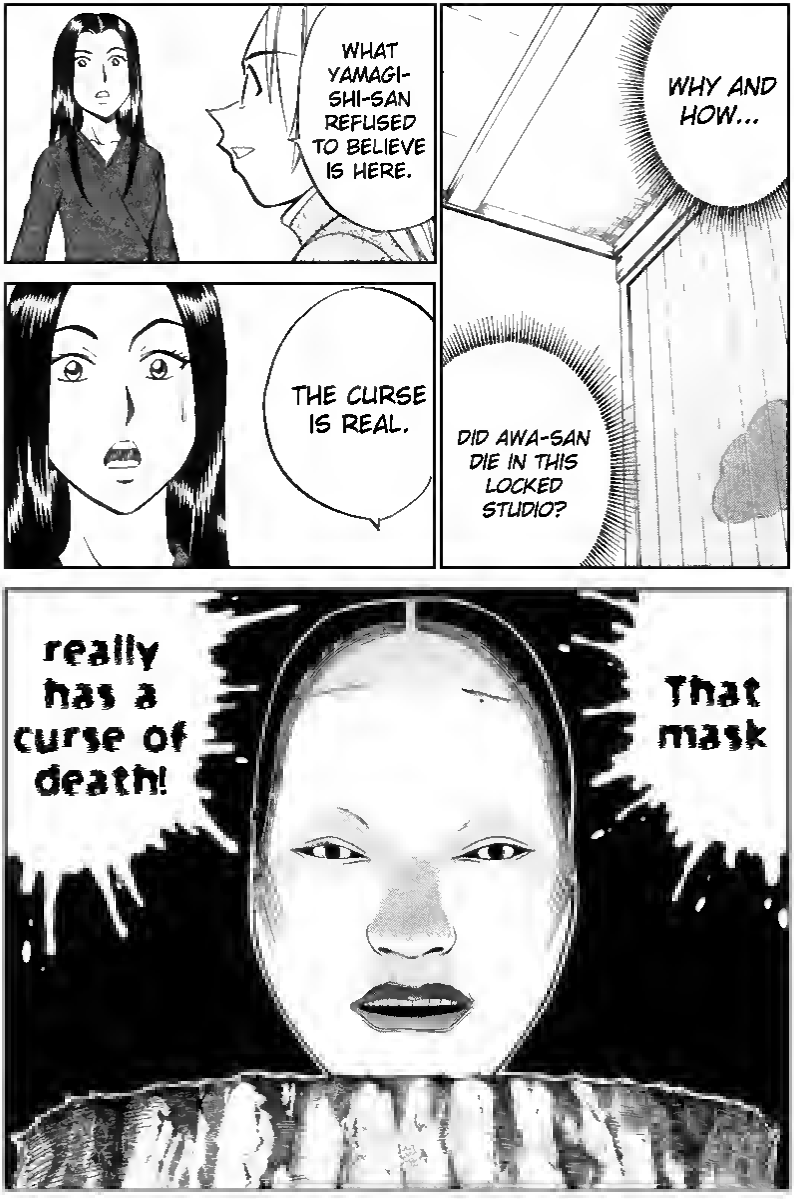
UM...
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO RECOMMENDED SHINRA...
INSPECTOR KUJIRAZAKI!
YOU GUYS...
AH!
TO THAT ETHNOLOGIST LADY, YAMAGISHI!
THEN, COULD IT BE THERE'S A CONNECTION TO THE NOH MASK?
WHY ARE YOU TWO HERE?

THERE ARE NO SIGNS OF FORCED ENTRY.
THE VICTIM WAS IN POSSESSION OF THE KEY, AND THERE AREN'T ANY SPARE KEYS.
TIME OF DEATH?
THE CAUSE OF DEATH WAS DUE TO BLOOD-LOSS FROM A STAB WOUND IN HIS ABDOMEN.
THE CRIME SCENE LOOKS MESSED UP.
WHETHER THIS IS FROM A STRUGGLE OR FROM A BODY THAT'S STRUGGLING WITH THE PAIN OF SUICIDE...
HM...
WE DON'T KNOW FOR SURE YET, BUT IT SEEMS TO BE AROUND DAWN.

THERE AREN'T ANY FOOT-PRINTS IN THE SUR-ROUNDING SNOW,
SO THIS WASN'T CAUSED BY AN INTRUDER COMING IN.
JUDGING BY THE SNOW COLLECTED IN THE WINDOW, IT LOOKS LIKE IT WASN'T OPENED.
THIS MUST BE SUICIDE.
THE CURSE IS REAL!
THE CURSE ...


AWA-SENSEI SPENT ALL NIGHT WITH THAT MASK.
THE CURSE MUST HAVE KILLED HIM!
THAT'S RIDICULOUS.
IT WASN'T SUICIDE.
THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A "CURSE."
HE JUST COMMITTED SUICIDE BECAUSE HE REGRETTED EVER MAKING A MASK LIKE THAT.

AWA-SAN DID REGRET SCULPTING THAT MASK.
BUT, IT'S FOR THAT EXACT REASON HE WOULDN'T KILL HIMSELF.
SHINRA.
SAID SO HIM-SELF.
IT'S A FAILED PIECE OF WORK THAT I WANT TO DESTROY.
BECAUSE AWA-SAN ...
THAT'S TRUE...
!
HE WOULD HAVE DE-STROYED THE MASK FIRST.
IF HE PLANNED TO COMMIT SUICIDE,
SO, WHAT REALLY OCCURRED HERE?


WHAT YAMAGI-SHI-SAN REFUSED TO BELIEVE IS HERE.
WHY AND HOW...
THE CURSE IS REAL.
DID AWA-SAN DIE IN THIS LOCKED STUDIO?
really has a curse of death!
That mask

—Op.04:呪いの面<前編> 完—

The cursed mask end

C.M.B. KATOU MOTOHIRO

Op.04

呪いの面〈後編〉

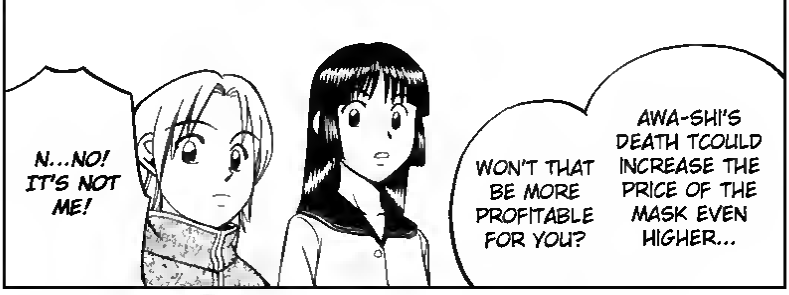
The cursed mask <Final part>

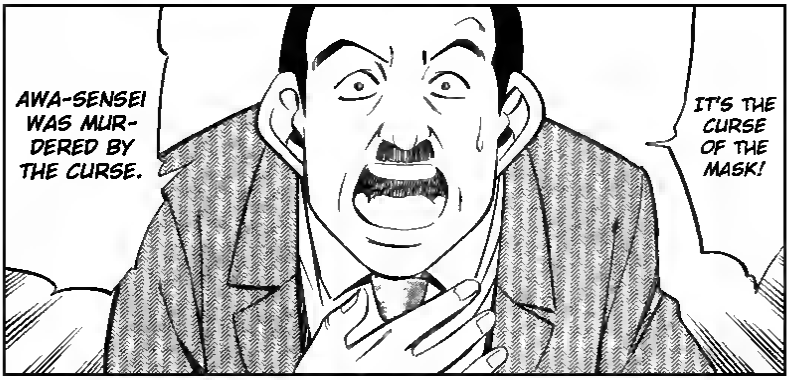
AWA-SAN WAS FOUND DEAD...
IN THIS STUDIO, WHICH RESEMBLES A NOH STAGE.

AND FINALLY, IT ISN'T A CASE OF SUICIDE.
IT WASN'T AN OUTSIDE INTRUDER.
THERE'S NO SIGN OF THE WINDOW BEING OPENED EITHER.
THE DOOR WAS LOCKED.
WHICH MEANS...
THAT THE CULPRIT IS ONE OF THESE PEOPLE!?

COME HERE.
HM...
LEADING UP TO THE TIME OF THE INCI-DENT.
PLEASE TELL ME EVERY-THING THAT OCCURRED ...
USE A SPARE ROOM.
QUESTION THEM SEPA-RATELY.
YOU THERE!

I WAS ASLEEP THE ENTIRE NIGHT!
WAIT! ARE YOU SUSPECTING ME!?
I HAVE NO REASON TO KILL AWA-SENSEI!
ALL I WANTED WAS TO SELL THE MASK!
I HEARD YOU ARE IN DEEP DEBT.
IF YOU DON'T PAY 3 MILLION YEN IN A WEEK, YOUR SHOP WILL BE TAKEN AWAY, RIGHT?
AND FROM WHAT I HEARD, AWA-SHI HELD THE PRICE OF THE MASK TO PREVENT IT FROM INCREASING, ISN'T THAT CORRECT?

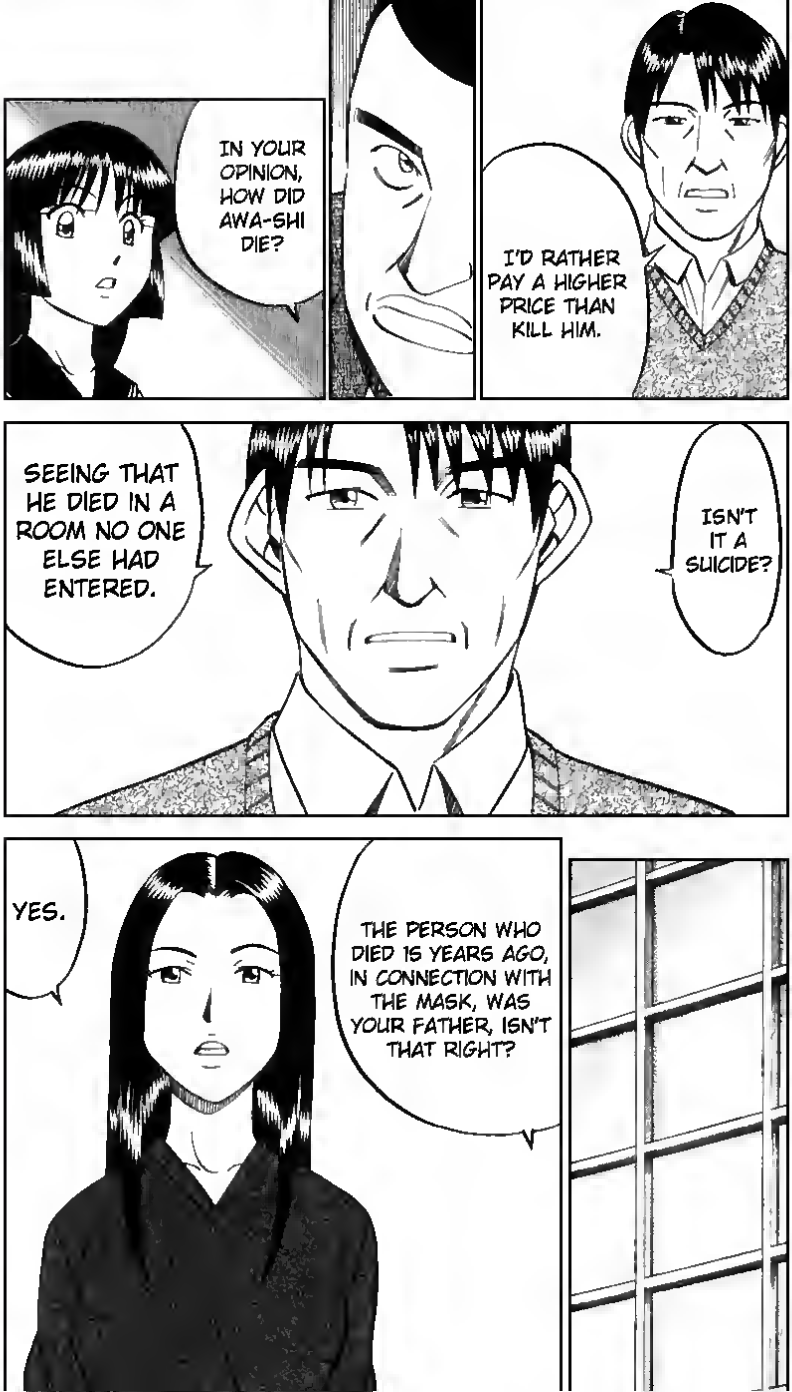

N...NO! IT'S NOT ME!
WON'T THAT BE MORE PROFITABLE FOR YOU?
AWA-SHI'S DEATH TCOULD INCREASE THE PRICE OF THE MASK EVEN HIGHER...


AWA-SENSEI WAS MURDERED BY THE CURSE.
IT'S THE CURSE OF THE MASK!

UNFORTUNATELY, I WAS FAST ASLEEP.
DID YOU HEAR ANYTHING?

I HEARD THAT YOU SLEPT IN THE ROOM ACROSS THE HALL FROM THE STUDIO.

AND NOW HE'S DEAD.
YOU AND AWA-SHI SEEMED TO COMPETE OVER THE MASK...

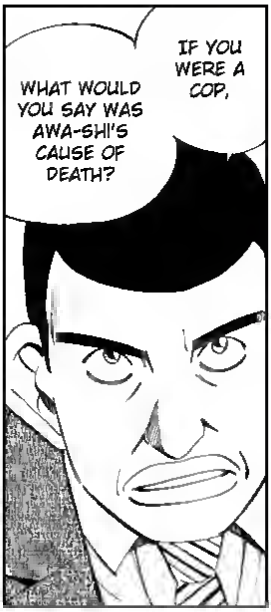

IN YOUR OPINION, HOW DID AWA-SHI DIE?
I'D RATHER PAY A HIGHER PRICE THAN KILL HIM.
SEEING THAT HE DIED IN A ROOM NO ONE ELSE HAD ENTERED.
ISN'T IT A SUICIDE?
YES.
THE PERSON WHO DIED 15 YEARS AGO, IN CONNECTION WITH THE MASK, WAS YOUR FATHER, ISN'T THAT RIGHT?

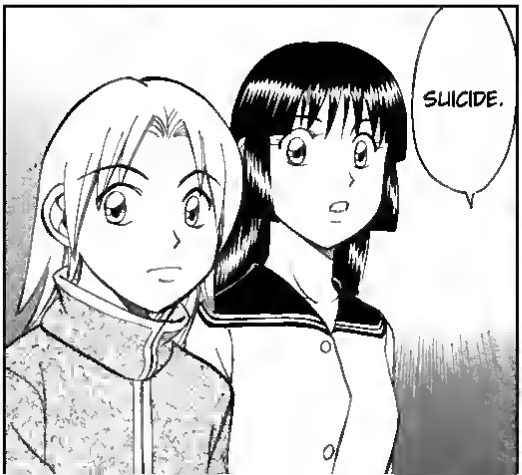
I DID.
SO I CAN ASSUME YOU HATED AWA-SHI?

MAY I ASK YOU ONE THING?

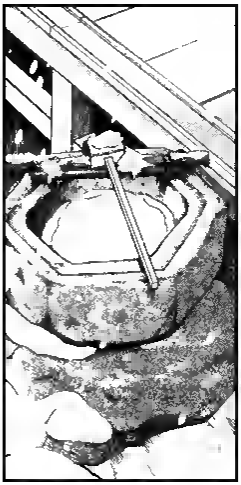
HOWEVER, I DIDN'T DO ANY-THING.
AND BECAUSE I SPENT THE NIGHT IN A ROOM FAR FROM THE STUDIO, I DIDN'T NOTICE ANYTHING.

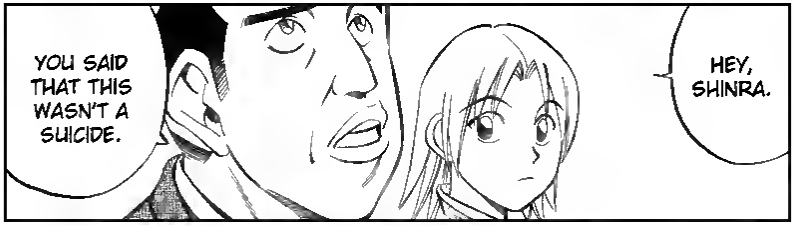
.....


IF YOU WERE A COP,
WHAT WOULD YOU SAY WAS AWA-SHI'S CAUSE OF DEATH?


SUICIDE.

HM...
THE SNOW IS FALLING AGAIN.




YOU SAID THAT THIS WASN'T A SUICIDE.
HEY, SHINRA.

EVERYTHING IS POINTING TOWARDS SUICIDE.
I AGREE, BUT YOU HEARD THE STATEMENTS OF THOSE THREE PEOPLE, RIGHT?

SINCE IT WAS STRANGE THAT HE'D COMMIT SUICIDE WHILE LEAVING THE MASK THAT HE WANTED TO DESTROY STILL INTACT...

WELL, I DID ON TV.
INSPECTOR KUJIRAZAKI, HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A SNOW-FLAKE UP CLOSE?
THEY HAVE A BEAUTIFUL HEXAGONAL SHAPE, RIGHT?
THAT'S RIGHT.
?
WHEN THOSE LITTLE PIECES COMBINE AS ONE, THE SHAPE THAT WE SEE IS ENTIRELY DIFFERENT.
EVEN THOUGH THEY LOOK LIKE THAT,
WHY AND HOW ...
DID AWA-SAN DIE?

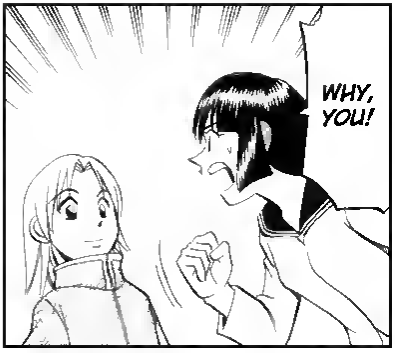
ALSO, WHAT SECRET IS HIDDEN INSIDE "THE CURSED MASK"?
IF THERE WAS A MURDERER,
HOW DID THEY GET INSIDE THE STUDIO!?
YOU KNOW THE ANSWER?
YEP.
P..PLEASE TELL ME! WHAT...
ACCESS TO THE SPECIAL EXHIBIT REQUIRES A FEE.
IF YOU WANT TO KNOW THE ANSWER, YOU MUST COMPENSATE ME.
COMPENSATE?
WITH WHAT?

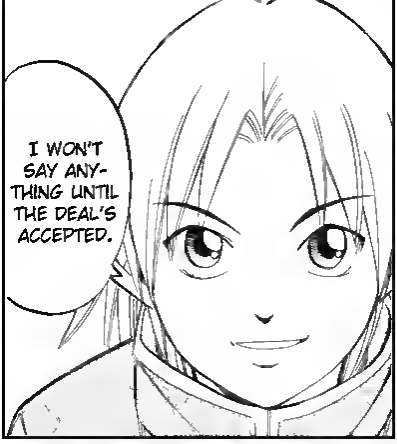
GIVE ME "THE CURSED MASK."

AND, THIS CASE TOO..!
HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE GOTTEN INTO TROUBLE JUST BECAUSE OF THAT MASK.

I'VE TOLD YOU TO STOP THIS!
SHINRA!

NO WAY!
IT'S NOT WISE TO WANT SOMETHING LIKE THAT!!


WHY, YOU!

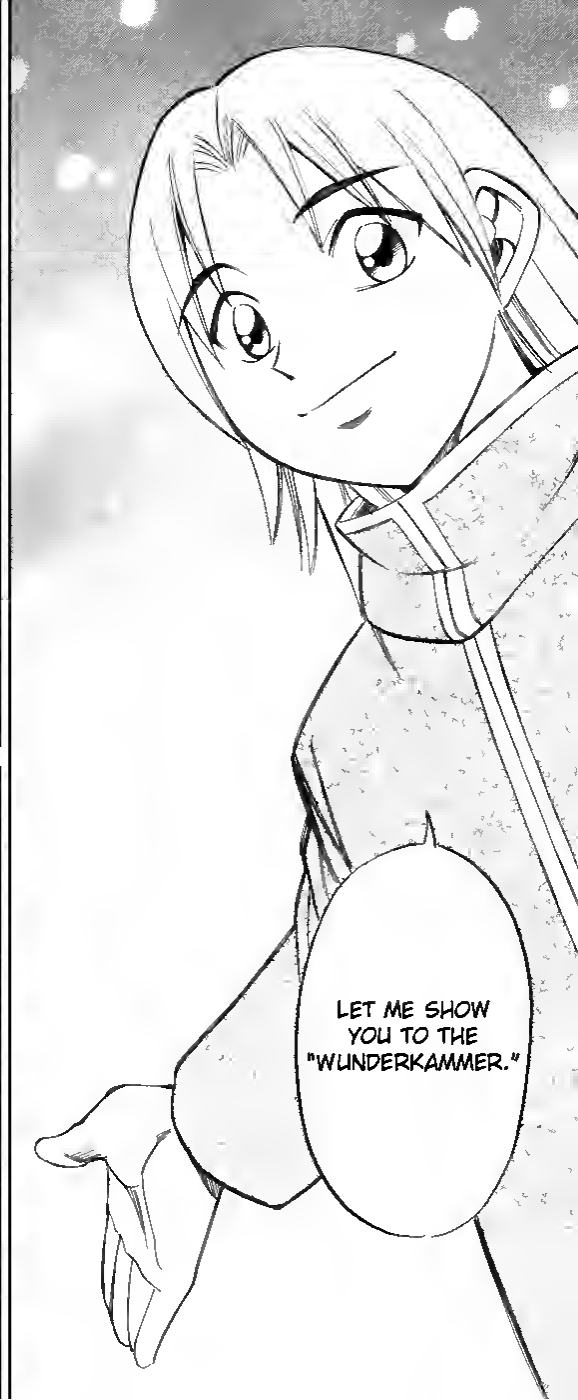

I WON'T SAY ANY-THING UNTIL THE DEAL'S ACCEPTED.

OKAY! I'LL GIVE YOU THE MASK!!

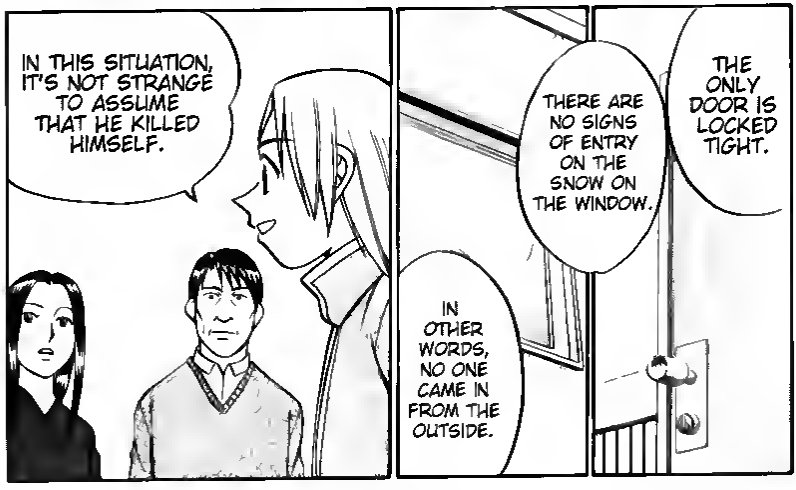
EXPLOIT-ING OTHER PEOPLE'S WEAK-NESS...

SO, EXPLAIN EVERY-THING!!
I'LL TAKE FULL RE-SPONSI-BILITY.

SO, WE HAVE A DEAL.


LET ME SHOW YOU TO THE "WUNDERKAMMER."

NOW, EVERY-ONE.
THIS IS THE STUDIO WHERE AWA-SAN WAS FOUND DEAD.

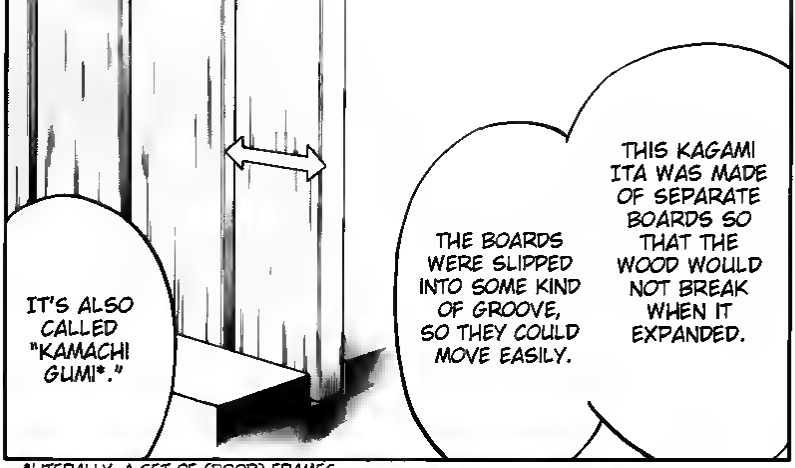

THE ONLY DOOR IS LOCKED TIGHT.
THERE ARE NO SIGNS OF ENTRY ON THE SNOW ON THE WINDOW.
IN OTHER WORDS, NO ONE CAME IN FROM THE OUTSIDE.
IN THIS SITUATION, IT'S NOT STRANGE TO ASSUME THAT HE KILLED HIMSELF.

HOWEVER, AWA-SAN WANTED TO DESTROY THE MASK.
SINCE THE MASK IS INTACT, IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE THAT HE WOULD COMMIT SUICIDE.
MAYBE HIS SUICIDE CAME FROM A SUDDEN IMPULSE.
THERE IS ANOTHER POSSI-BILITY.
BECAUSE THE TRUTH IS, THIS STUDIO CAN BE ENTERED BY OTHER PEOPLE EASILY.
H... HEY! THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
INSPEC-TOR KUJI-RAZAKI,

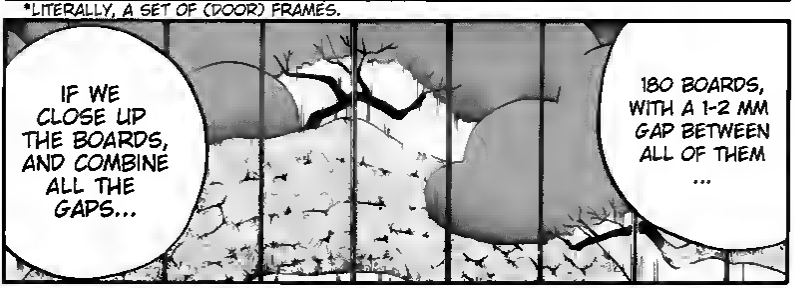
DO YOU REMEMBER THE TOPIC WE WERE DISCUSSING OUTSIDE?
ABOUT THE SNOW FLAKES?
THE BEAUTIFUL HEXAGONAL SNOWFLAKES.
THOSE CRYSTALS ARE SO TINY, THEY ARE HARD TO SEE.
HOWEVER, IF MANY OF THOSE SMALL CRYSTALS WERE GATHERED TOGETHER ...

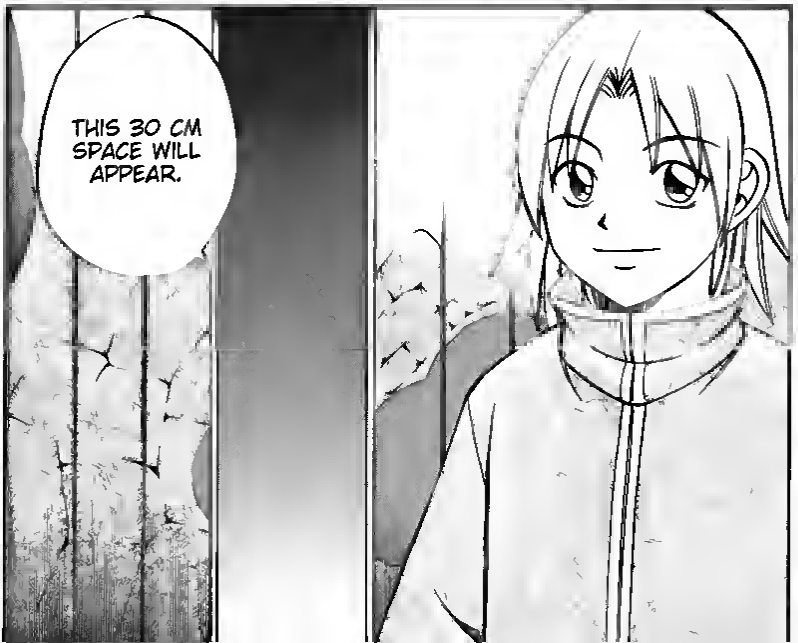
WE'LL GET A DIFFERENT SHAPE.

WHAAAAAAAT!?!
THE LENGTH OF THIS KAGAMI ITA IS ABOUT 4 KEN (9 METERS).
THIS WALL WAS BUILT BY ASSEMBLING ABOUT 180 BOARDS, EACH 5 CM WIDE.
AS AWA-SAN COMPLAINED, DUE TO ITS OLD AGE, GAPS FORMED BETWEEN THESE BOARDS. ON TOP OF THAT, DUE TO THE COLD WEATHER, THE GAPS ARE GETTING WIDER.
EVEN THOUGH IT'S ONLY BY ABOUT 1-2 MM.

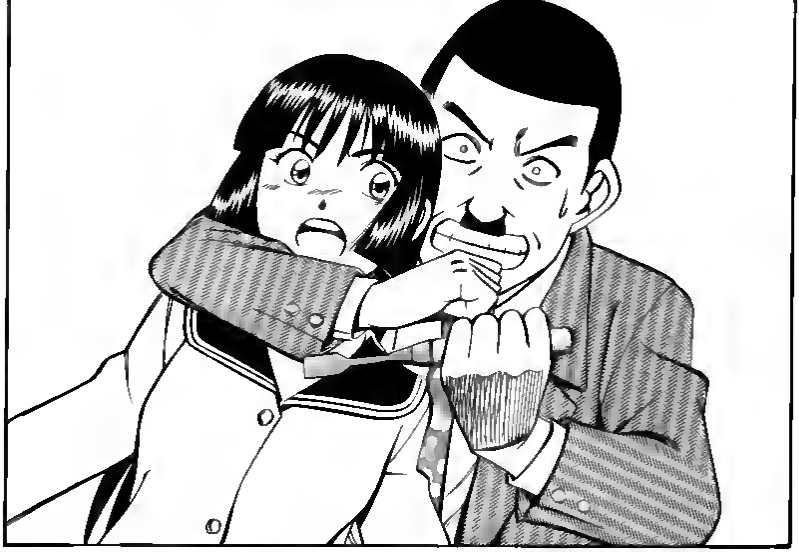

IT'S ALSO CALLED "KAMACHI GUMI*."
THE BOARDS WERE SLIPPED INTO SOME KIND OF GROOVE, SO THEY COULD MOVE EASILY.
THIS KAGAMI ITA WAS MADE OF SEPARATE BOARDS SO THAT THE WOOD WOULD NOT BREAK WHEN IT EXPANDED.

*LITERALLY, A SET OF (DOOR) FRAMES.



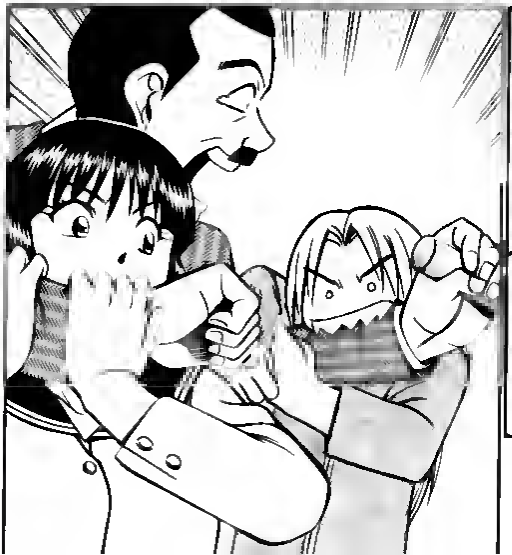


THE CULPRIT CAME IN THROUGH HERE
DON'T MOVE!
NEXT IS THE CURSE BEHIND THE MASK...



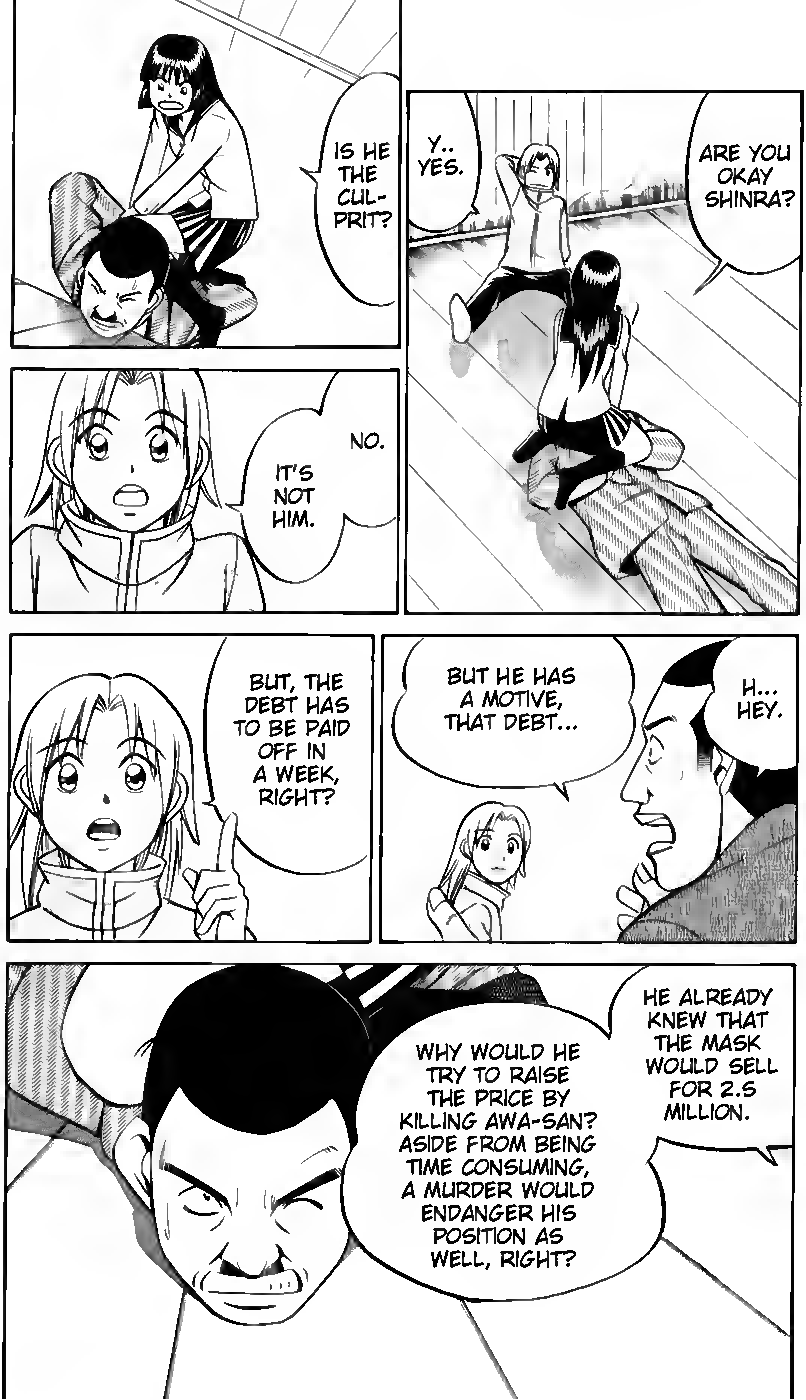
STOP IT, IIDA!!
DROP THAT TOOL, NOW!!

IT'S NOT ME!! I DIDN'T DO ANY-THING...



IT'S A "CURSE" ... PLEASE TRUST ME!!
I KNOW! CALM DOWN!!

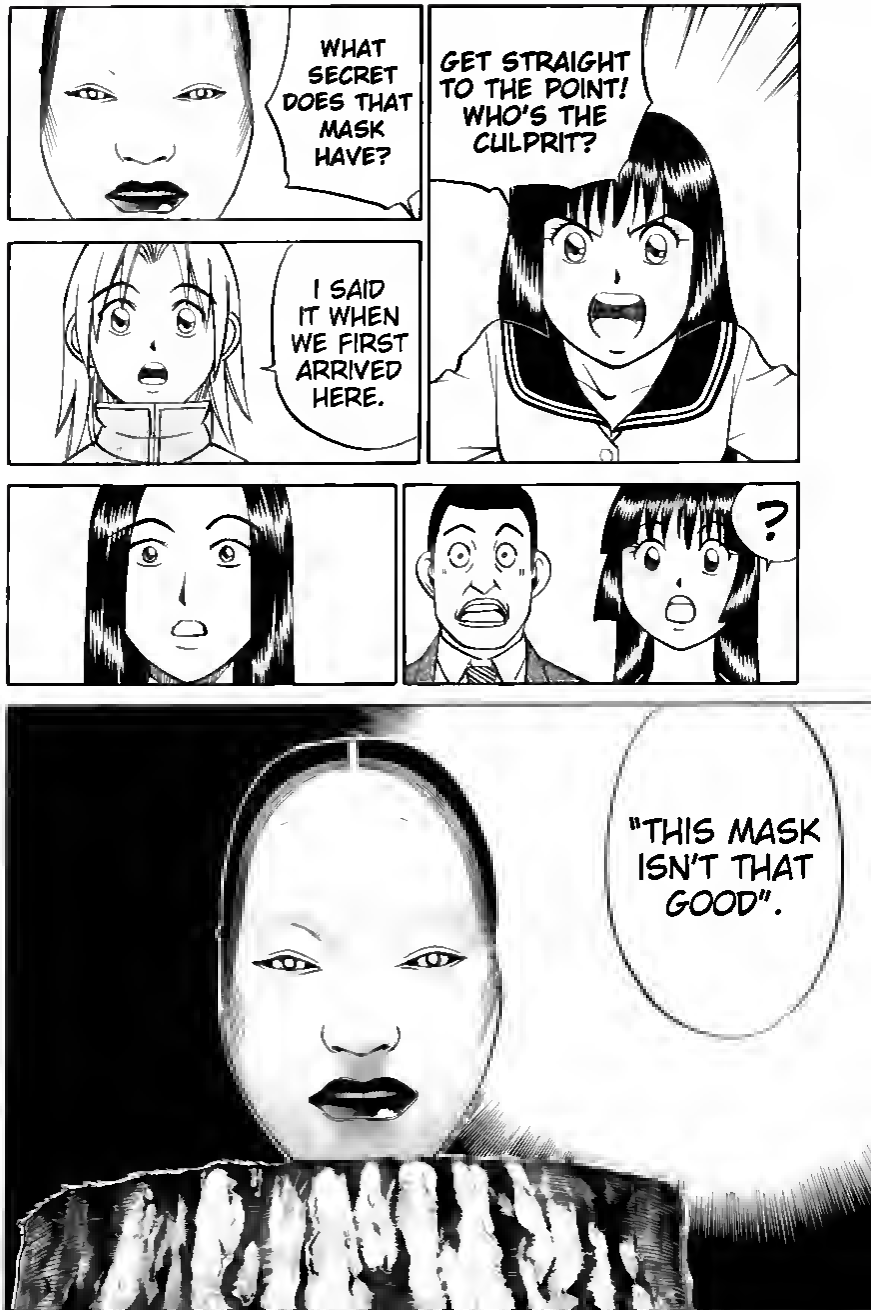
DAMN KID!
SHINRA!
LET NANASE-HAN HO!*
*LET NANASE-SAN GO!
ダーン

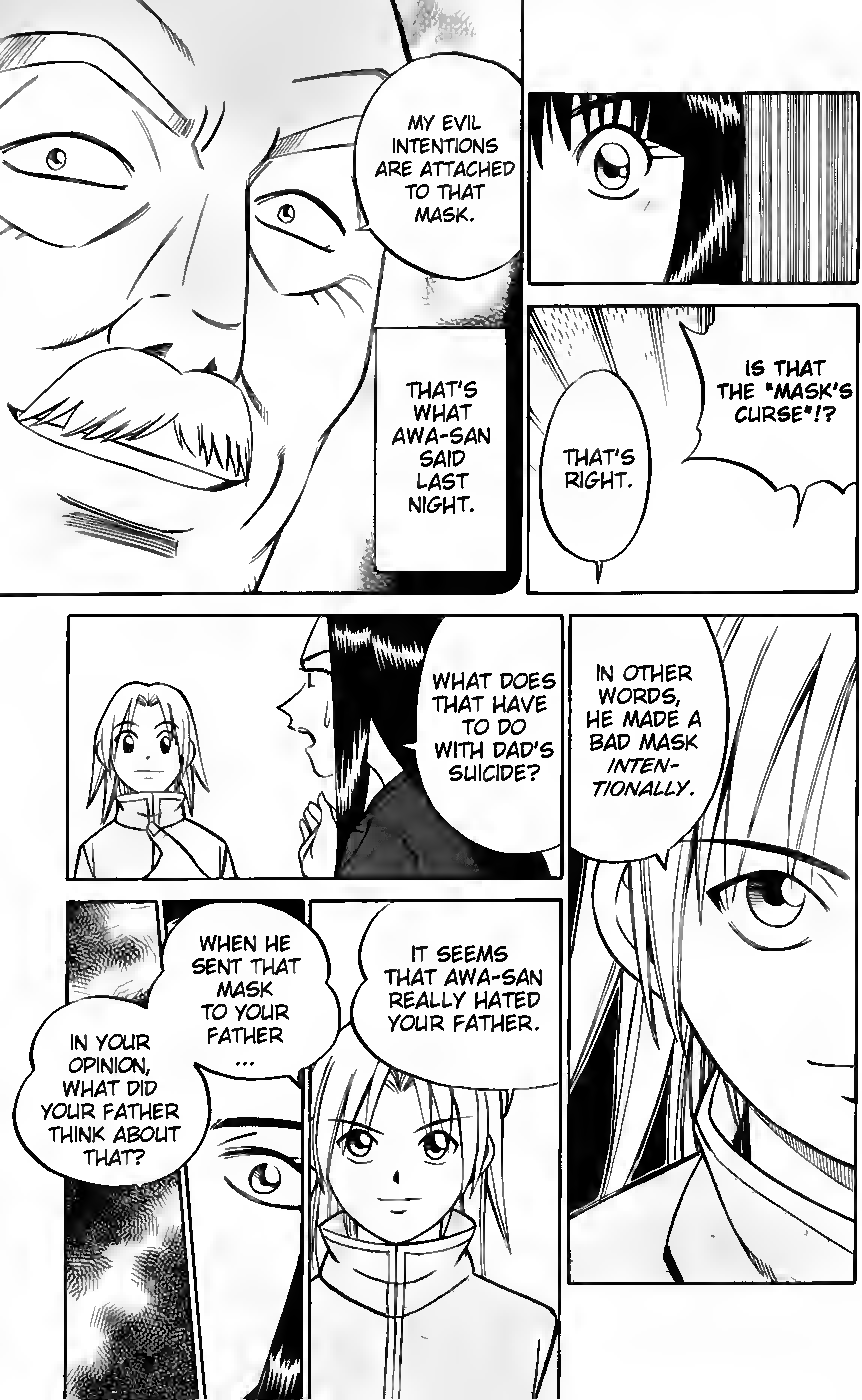

IS HE THE CULPRIT?
Y.. YES.
ARE YOU OKAY SHINRA?
NO. IT'S NOT HIM.
BUT, THE DEBT HAS TO BE PAID OFF IN A WEEK, RIGHT?
BUT HE HAS A MOTIVE, THAT DEBT...
H... HEY.
WHY WOULD HE TRY TO RAISE THE PRICE BY KILLING AWA-SAN? ASIDE FROM BEING TIME CONSUMING, A MURDER WOULD ENDANGER HIS POSITION AS WELL, RIGHT?
HE ALREADY KNEW THAT THE MASK WOULD SELL FOR 2.5 MILLION.

ゴチ
SHUT UP!
SO THE CULPRIT ...
I TOLD YOU IT WASN'T ME!! LET ME GO NOW!!
IF WE CONSIDER ENOMOTO -SAN...
THERE IS NO MOTIVE.
THEN, WHAT ABOUT YAMAGISHI -SAN?
YOU HAVE ENOUGH MOTIVE, BECAUSE AWA-SAN ...
DROVE YOUR FATHER TO SUICIDE.
BUT THERE IS A PROBLEM HERE.

YAMAGISHI-SAN STILL DOESN'T KNOW WHY THE MASK DROVE HER FATHER TO COMMIT SUICIDE.
THE SECRET CURSE HIDDEN IN THE MASK.
IN ORDER TO KNOW THAT, SHE WANTED TO BUY IT.
AT THIS MOMENT,
YOU DON'T HAVE A MOTIVE.
THAT'S EASY.
YAMAGISHI -SAN SAID THAT "THERE IS NO CURSE."
WAIT A MINUTE!
HOW CAN YOU BE SURE SHE DOESN'T KNOW THE SECRET OF THE MASK?
?
IF SHE KNEW THE SECRET, SHE WOULD HAVE SAID THAT "THERE IS A CURSE."

NO, I'VE SAID THE MOST IMPORTANT THING.
THAT "AT THE MOMENT, YAMAGISHI -SAN DOESN'T HAVE A MOTIVE."
IF SO, THEN THERE'S NO CULPRIT HERE!
WAIT, SHINRA!
SOMEONE KNEW THE SECRET OF THE NOH MASK'S "CURSE",
AND THOUGHT THAT YAMAGISHI -SAN MIGHT COMMIT MURDER.
BUT, IN A SHORT TIME, IT CAN BE ENSURED THAT SHE'LL HAVE A STRONG MOTIVE.
THAT PERSON THOUGHT THAT SHE WAS CAPABLE OF THAT.


WHAT SECRET DOES THAT MASK HAVE?
GET STRAIGHT TO THE POINT! WHO'S THE CULPRIT?
I SAID IT WHEN WE FIRST ARRIVED HERE.
?
"THIS MASK ISN'T THAT GOOD".

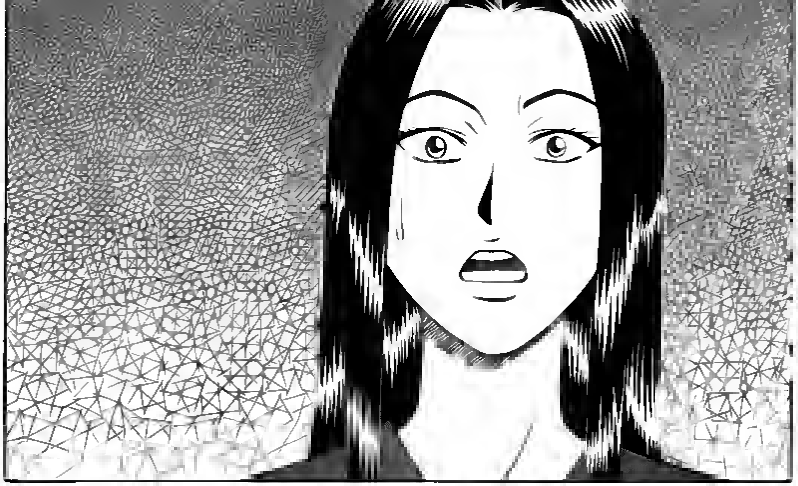

MY EVIL INTENTIONS ARE ATTACHED TO THAT MASK.
THAT'S WHAT AWA-SAN SAID LAST NIGHT.
IS THAT THE "MASK'S CURSE"!?
THAT'S RIGHT.
WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH DAD'S SUICIDE?
IN OTHER WORDS, HE MADE A BAD MASK *INTENTIONALLY*.
IT SEEMS THAT AWA-SAN REALLY HATED YOUR FATHER.
WHEN HE SENT THAT MASK TO YOUR FATHER ...
IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT DID YOUR FATHER THINK ABOUT THAT?

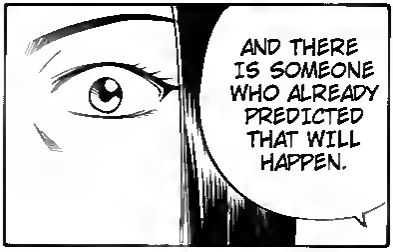
HE ANALYZED AND EVALUATED THE MASK,
YAMAGISHI -SAN'S FATHER WAS AN ART CRITIC.
OF COURSE, HIS EVALUATION WAS...
A MASK THAT WAS MADE POORLY ON PURPOSE.
"I CAN'T SENSE EVEN A FRAGMENT OF TALENT."
"THERE'S NOTHING TO BE SAID ABOUT AWA'S MASK SCULPTING."

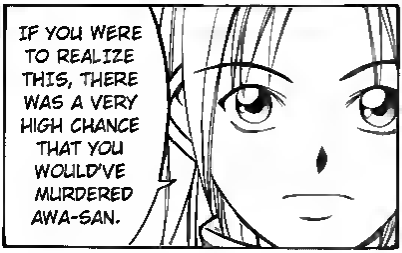
THAT WAS WHAT AWA-SAN HOPED TO ACHIEVE.
AFTER-WARDS, HE USED ALL HIS SKILL ...
AND CONTINUED ON TO PRODUCE AMAZING WORKS OF ART.
HE BECAME NUMBER ONE AMONG MASK SCULPTORS.
THE PUBLIC'S OPINION WAS VERY POSITIVE.
BUT THERE WAS ONE MAN WHO COULDN'T ACCEPT THAT OPINION.
HE'S REALLY A GENIUS.
AS USUAL, AWA-SENSEI'S SCULPTING IS AMAZING.

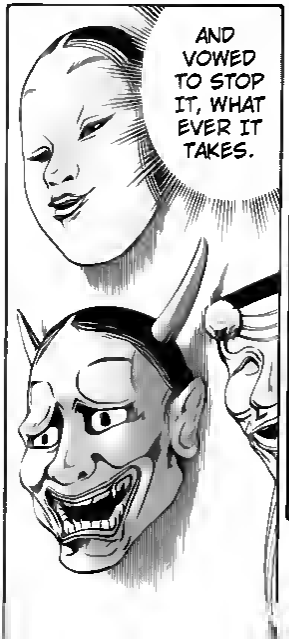
AWA-SAN'S BEAUTIFUL MASKS MADE HIM UNDERSTAND HOW HE REALLY WAS.
YAMAGISHI -SAN'S FATHER HAD COMPLETELY AND SEVERELY CRITICIZED HIM PUBLICLY.
BUT, HE COULDN'T TAKE HIS WORDS BACK.
HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF THAT MASK, YAMAGISHI -SAN'S FATHER ...
MAYBE AWA-SAN DIDN'T MEAN TO DRIVE HIM TO SUICIDE.

PUT A "CURSE" ON HIMSELF THROUGH WORDS.
AND FOR SOMEONE WHO PUTS HIS SOUL INTO HIS WORDS,
THAT'S ENOUGH TO DRIVE HIM TO DEATH.

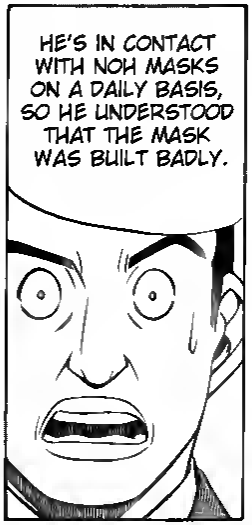



AND THERE IS SOMEONE WHO ALREADY PREDICTED THAT WILL HAPPEN.

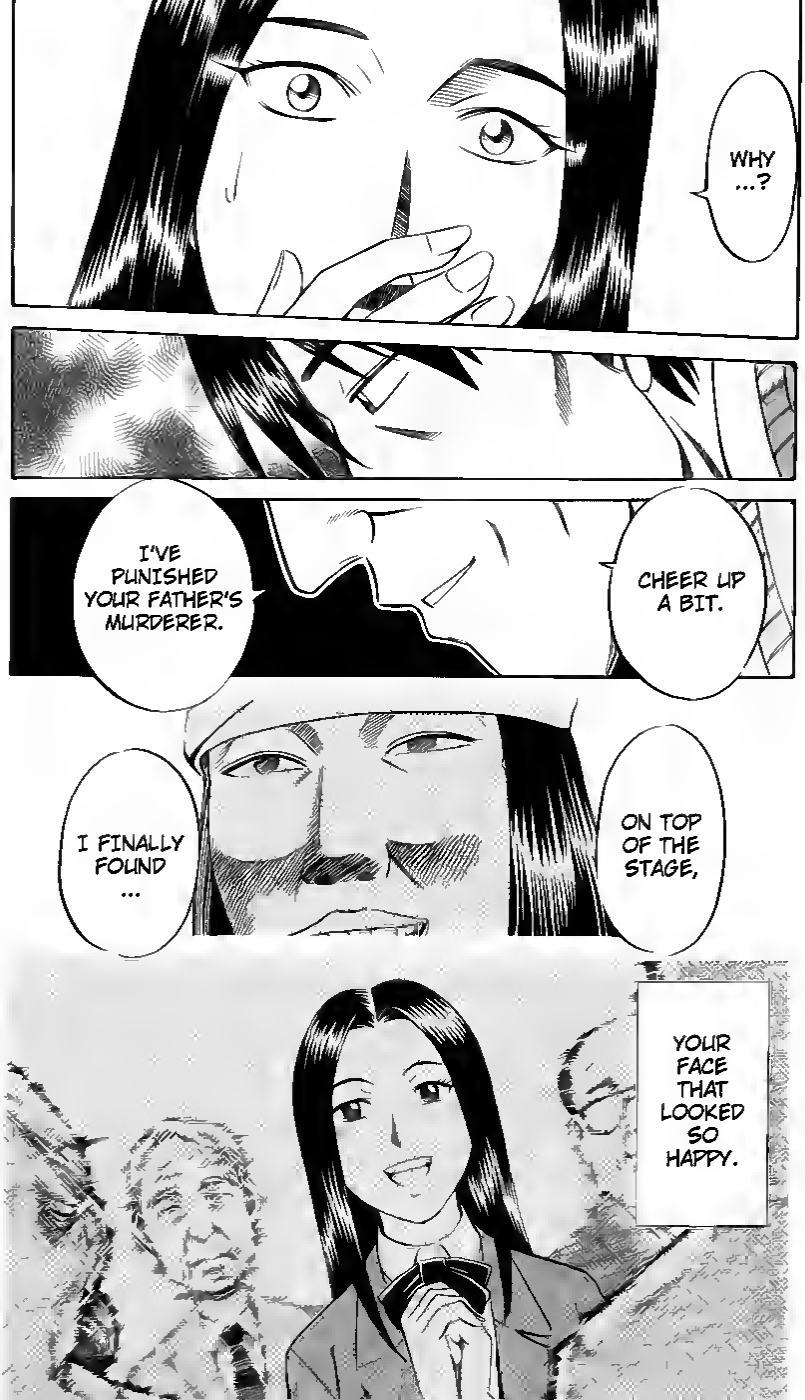

IF YOU WERE TO REALIZE THIS, THERE WAS A VERY HIGH CHANCE THAT YOU WOULD'VE MURDERED AWA-SAN.


AND VOWED TO STOP IT, WHAT EVER IT TAKES.

THE PERSON REALIZED WHAT TRAGEDY MIGHT OCCUR.

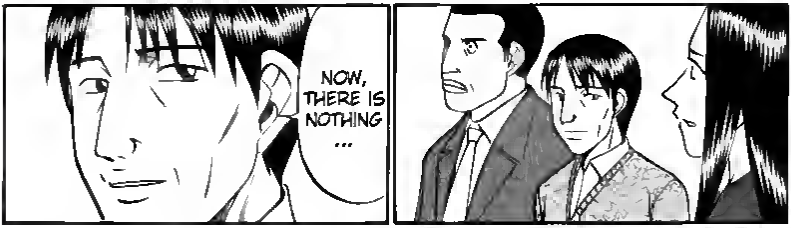

HE'S IN CONTACT WITH NOH MASKS ON A DAILY BASIS, SO HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE MASK WAS BUILT BADLY.

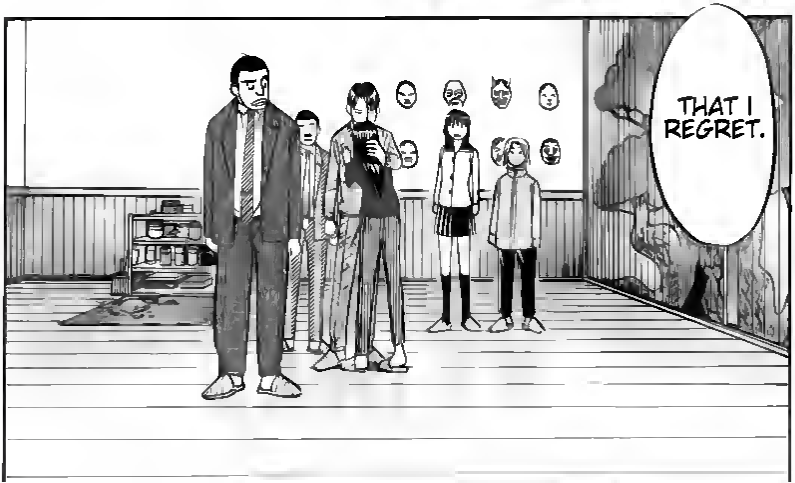
THE CULPRIT IS THE NOH DANCER!
ENOMOTO SEIMEI -SAN.

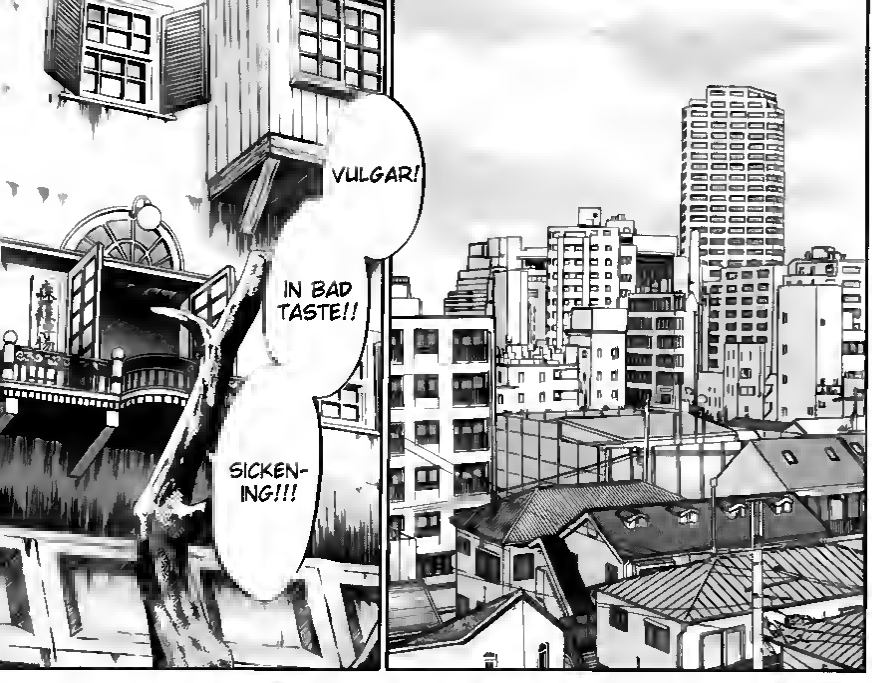

WHY ...?
CHEER UP A BIT.
I'VE PUNISHED YOUR FATHER'S MURDERER.
I FINALLY FOUND ...
ON TOP OF THE STAGE,
YOUR FACE THAT LOOKED SO HAPPY.

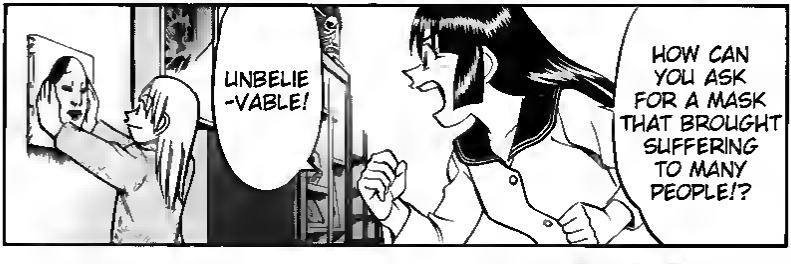
I CAN'T LOSE THAT.
THAT'S EVERYTHING TO ME.
WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME ANYTHING?
IF SO THEN I...
THAT WOULD BE USE-LESS.
A MOUNTAIN GOAT ALWAYS CLIMBS MOUNTAINS.

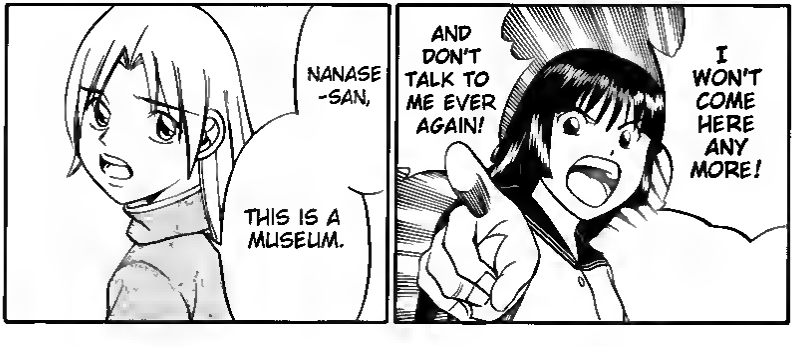
AND I'M THE SAME WAY.
YOUR FATHER, AND ALSO AWA-SENSEI,
AND YOU AS WELL ...
EVEN IF IT'S A PATH OF DESTRUCTION.
YOU WON'T TURN AWAY FROM YOUR PATH...

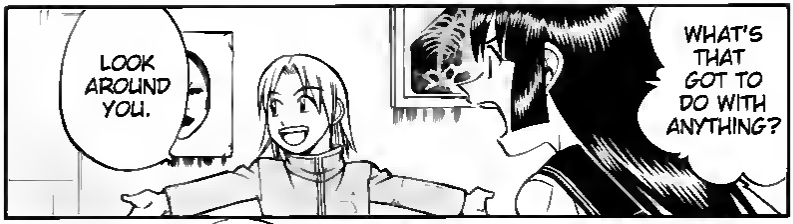

NOW, THERE IS NOTHING ...

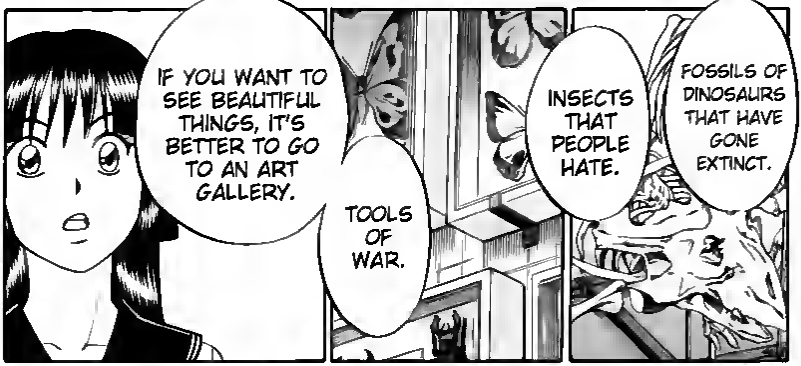

THAT I REGRET.

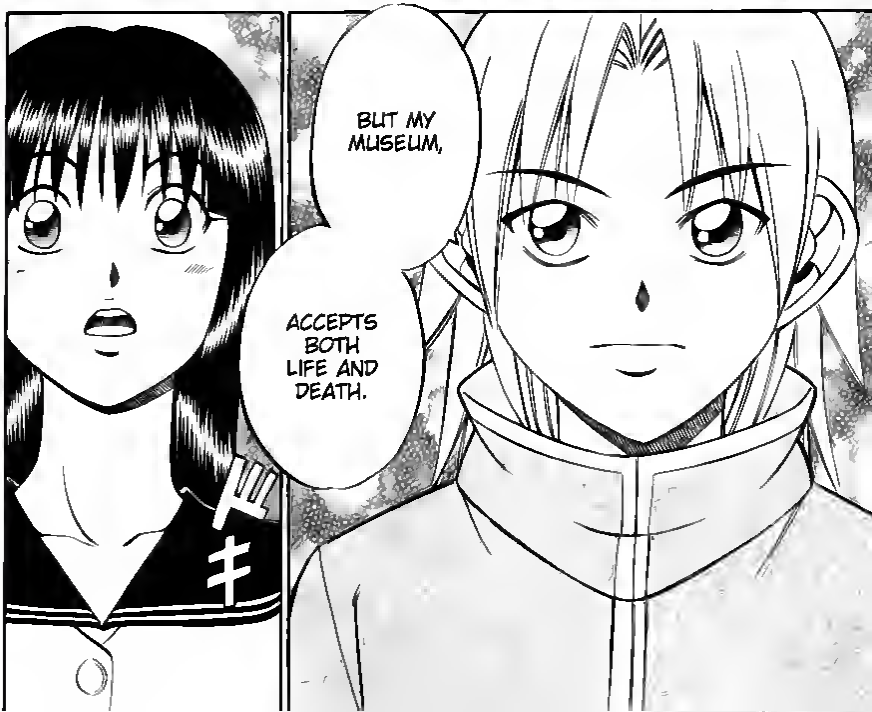

VULGAR!
IN BAD TASTE!!
SICKEN-ING!!!

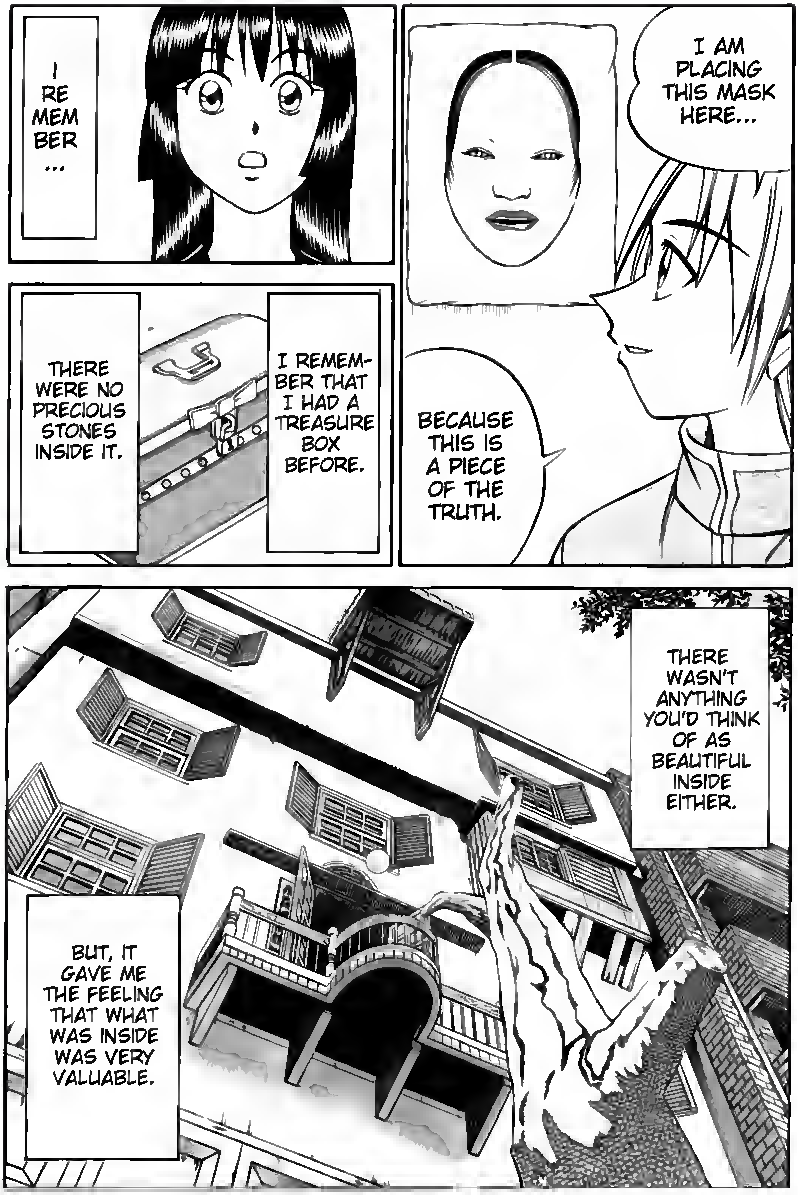

UNBELIE-VABLE!
HOW CAN YOU ASK FOR A MASK THAT BROUGHT SUFFERING TO MANY PEOPLE!?


NANASE-SAN,
THIS IS A MUSEUM.
AND DON'T TALK TO ME EVER AGAIN!
I WON'T COME HERE ANY MORE!


LOOK AROUND YOU.
WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH ANYTHING?


IF YOU WANT TO SEE BEAUTIFUL THINGS, IT'S BETTER TO GO TO AN ART GALLERY.
TOOLS OF WAR.
INSECTS THAT PEOPLE HATE.
FOSSILS OF DINOSAURS THAT HAVE GONE EXTINCT.


BUT MY MUSEUM,
ACCEPTS BOTH LIFE AND DEATH.


I RE MEM BER ...
I AM PLACING THIS MASK HERE...
BECAUSE THIS IS A PIECE OF THE TRUTH.
I REMEM-BER THAT I HAD A TREASURE BOX BEFORE.
THERE WERE NO PRECIOUS STONES INSIDE IT.
THERE WASN'T ANYTHING YOU'D THINK OF AS BEAUTIFUL INSIDE EITHER.
BUT, IT GAVE ME THE FEELING THAT WHAT WAS INSIDE WAS VERY VALUABLE.

OP 4: THE CURSED MASK <LAST PART>

THE CURSED MASK

Op.03

青いビル〈前編〉‥‥月刊少年マガジン2005年12月号掲載
Blue building

青いビル〈後編〉‥‥月刊少年マガジン2006年1月号掲載
Blue building

Op.04

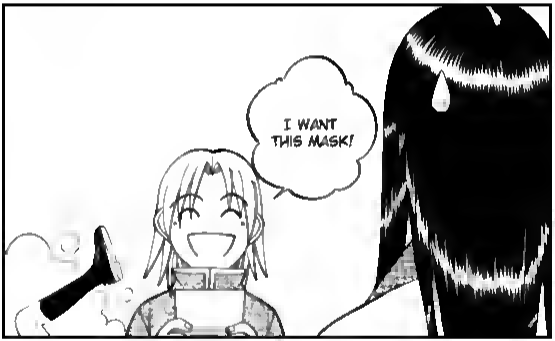
呪いの面〈前編〉‥‥月刊少年マガジン2006年2月号掲載
The cursed mask

呪いの面〈後編〉‥‥月刊少年マガジン2006年3月号掲載
The cursed mask

C.M.B: The Cursed Mask

-- Translator: Saturn Beaver -- Proofreader: SpiffyBug --
Cleaner: Lynossa -- Typesetter: Tsunao
-- QC: Hecko --

SCARY STUFFS? SPOOKY ITEMS?
A MASK WITH CURSE COMING RIGHT AWAY.



THANKS FOR ANZU & DRACO 1988
FOR THE RAWS

Orion Wave

C.M.B

C.M.B: The Cursed Mask, Part Two

--Text Supplier and Translator: Saturn Beaver--
--Proofreader: Spiffybug--Cleaner: Gobi--
--Typesetter: Tsunao--QC: Hecko--

HIS NAME IS KIND OF LONG, SO I REMEMBER HIM AS "THAT MONKEY DETECTIVE".

THANKS FOR ANZU & DRACO 1988 FOR THE RAWS

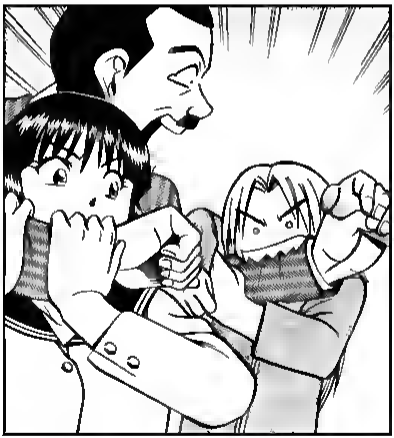
Orion Wave

Q.E.D

C.M.B: The Cursed Mask, Part Three

--Text Supplier and Translator: Saturn Beaver--
--Proofreader: Spiffybug--QC: argentscarf--
--Cleaner and Typesetter: Ithinkweirdthoughts--

TRESPASSERS? NO PROBLEM!
OUR GUARD DOGS CAN TAKE CARE OF IT!!



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